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THE EARLY JESUIT MISSIONS

IN

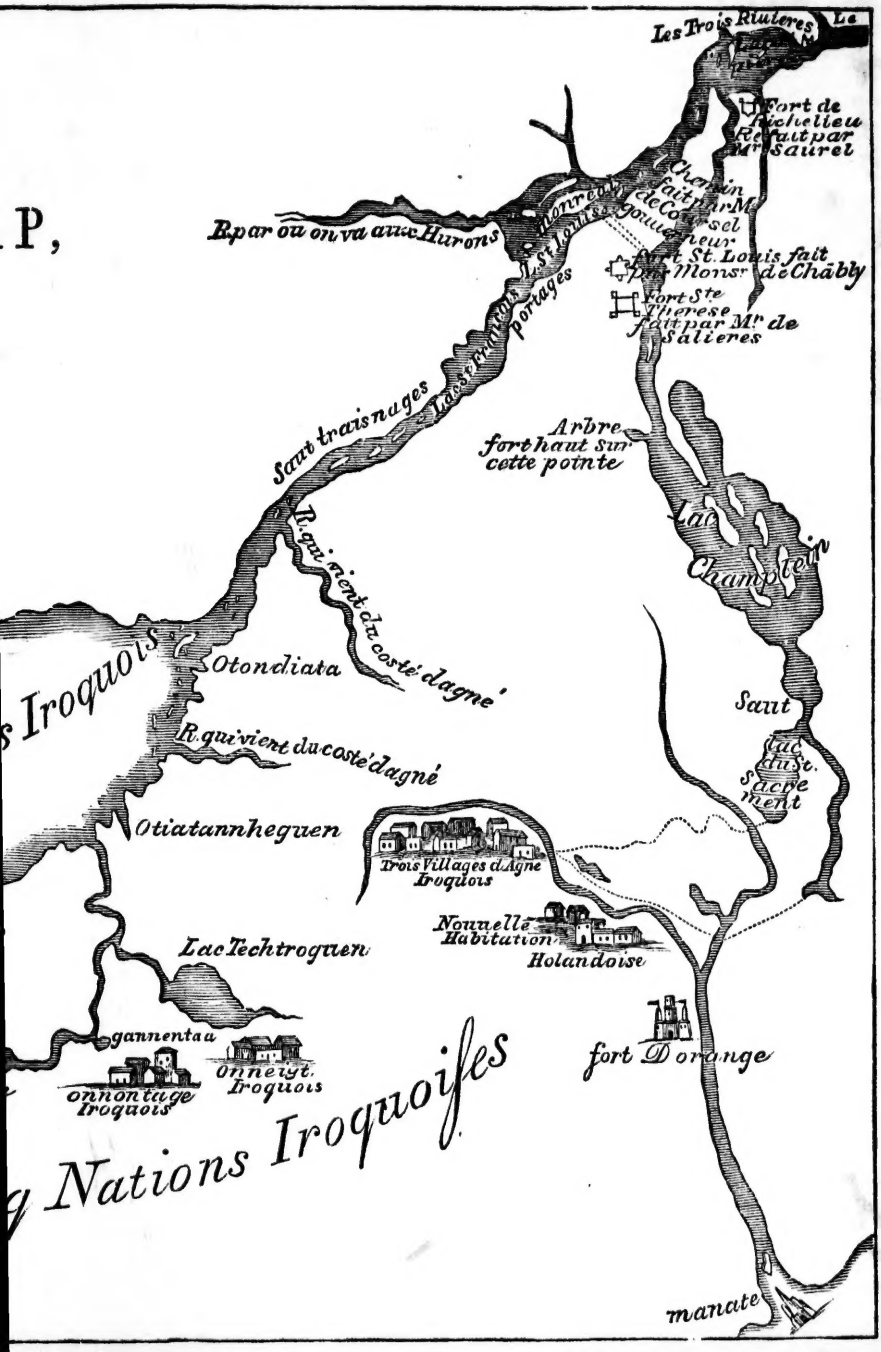
NORTH AMERICA.

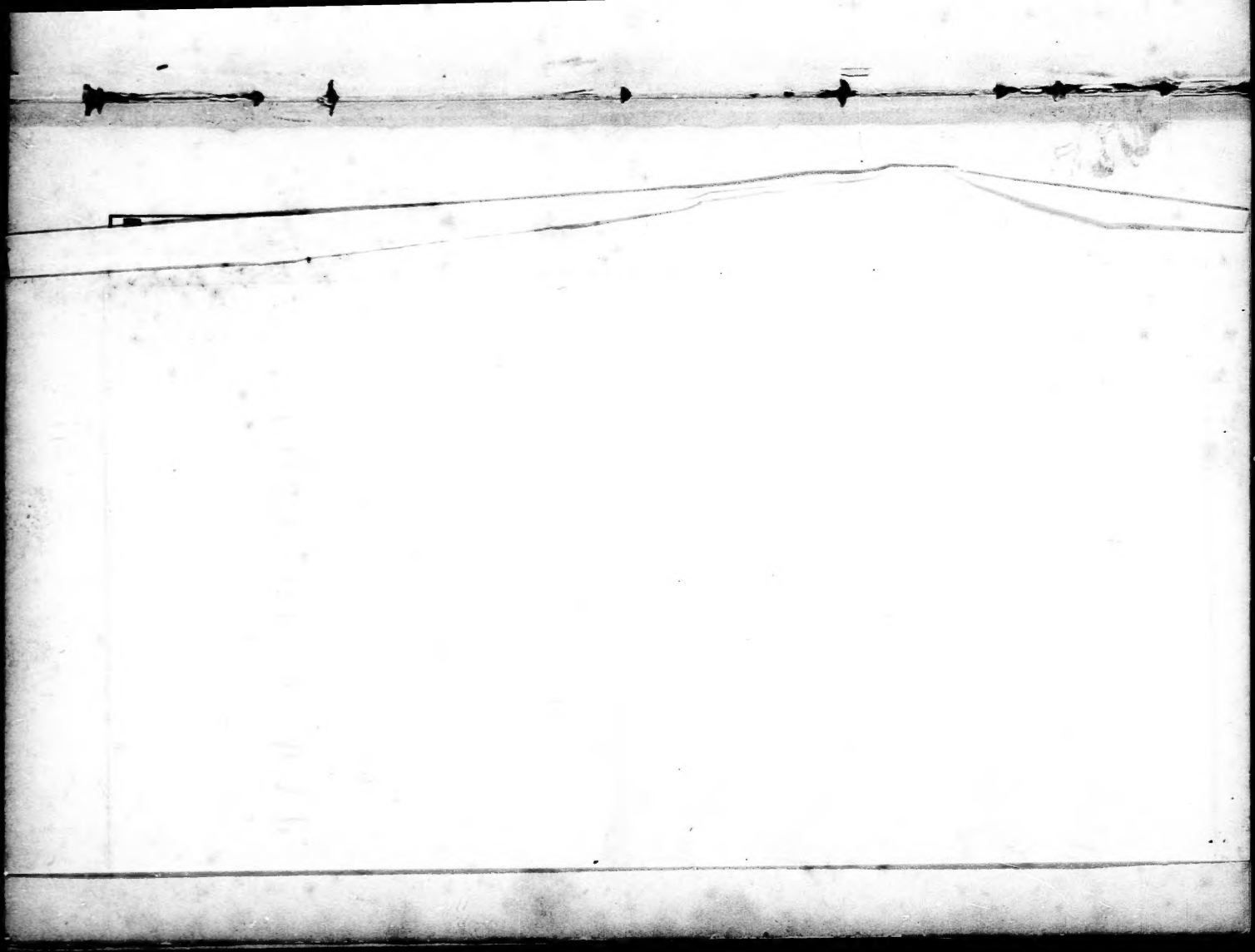
COPY OF A MAP,

PUBLISHED BY THE JESUITS,

IN 1664.

Les Cinq Nations


Les Trois Rivieres
Le
Fort de Richelieu Refait par Mr Saurel
Le Chenin fait par Mr de Coulonsel
Gouverneur
Fort St. Louis fait par Monsr de Chably
Fort Ste Therese fait par Mr de Salieres
Portages
Lac
Arbre fort haut sur cette pointe
Saut trais nages
Lac
Champlein
R. qui vient du coste d'agné
Otondiata
Iroquois
Saut
R. qui vient du coste d'agné
Otiatannheguen
Trois Villages d'Agne Iroquois
Nouvelle Habitation Holandoise
Lac Techtroguen
gannentaa
onneiyt. Iroquois
onnontage Iroquois
fort D'orange
manate
Nations Iroquoises



THE

EARLY JESUIT MISSIONS

IN

NORTH AMERICA;

COMPILED AND TRANSLATED FROM THE LETTERS OF THE FRENCH JESUITS, WITH NOTES.

BY THE

REV. WILLIAM INGRAHAM KIP, M.A.,

CORRESPONDING MEMBER OF THE NEW YORK HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

PART I.

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TO

THE HON. GEORGE FOLSOM,

IN REMEMBRANCE OF

MANY PLEASANT HOURS PASSED IN HIS COMPANY,

THIS VOLUME

IS INSCRIBED AS A SLIGHT TESTIMONY OF REGARD.

PREFACE.

THERE is no page of our country's history more touching and romantic, than that which records the labors and sufferings of the Jesuit Missionaries. In these western wilds they were the earliest pioneers of civilization and faith. The wild hunter or the adventurous traveller, who, penetrating the forests, came to new and strange tribes, often found that years before, the disciples of Loyola had preceded him in that wilderness. Traditions of the "Black robes" still lingered among the Indians. On some moss-grown tree they pointed out the traces of their work, and in wonder he deciphered, carved side by side on its trunk, the emblem of our salvation and the lilies of the Bourbons. Amid the snows of Hudson's Bay—among the woody islands and beautiful inlets of the St. Lawrence—by the council fires of the Hurons and the Algonquins—at the sources of the Mississippi, where, first of the white men, their eyes looked upon the Falls of St. Anthony, and then traced down the course of the bounding river, as it rushed onward to earn its title of "Father of Waters"—on the vast prairies of Illinois and Missouri—among the blue hills which hem in the salubrious dwellings of the Cherokees—and in the thick canebrakes of Louisiana—everywhere were found the members of the "Society of Jesus." Marquette, Joliet, Brebeuf, Jogues, Lallemand, Rasles, and Marest, are the names which the West should ever hold in remembrance.

But it was only by suffering and trial that these early laborers won their triumphs. Many of them too were men who had stood high in camps and courts, and could contrast their desolate state in the solitary wigwam with the refinement and affluence which had waited on their early years. But now all these were gone. Home—the love of kindred—the golden ties of relationship—all were to be forgotten by these stern and high-wrought men, and they were often to go forth into the wilderness, without an adviser on their way, save their God. Through long and sorrowful years they were obliged to "sow in tears" before they could "reap in joy." Every self-denial gathered around them which could wear upon the spirit and cause the heart to fail. Mighty forests were to be threaded on foot, and the great lakes of the West passed in the feeble bark canoe. Hunger and cold and disease were to be encountered, until nothing but the burning zeal within could keep alive the wasted and sinking frame. But worse than all were those spiritual evils which forced them to weep and pray in darkness. They had to endure the contradiction of those they came to save, who often after listening for months with apparent interest, so that the Jesuit began to hope they would soon be numbered with his converts, suddenly quitted him with cold and derisive words, and turned again to the superstitions of their tribe.

Most of them too were martyrs to their faith. It will be noticed in reading this volume, how few of their number "died the common death of all men," or slept at last in the grounds which their Church had consecrated. Some, like Jogues and du Poisson and Souel, sunk beneath the blows of the infuriated savages, and their bodies were thrown out to feed the vulture, whose shriek, as he flapped his wings above them, had been their only requiem. Others, like Brebeuf and Lallemand and Senat, died at the stake, and their ashes "flew no marble tells us whither," while the

dusky sons of the forest stood around, and mingled their wild yells of triumph with the martyrs' dying prayers. Others again, like the aged Marquette, sinking beneath years of toil, fell asleep in the wilderness, and their sorrowing companions dug their graves in the green turf, where for many years the rude forest ranger stopped to invoke their names, and bow in prayer before the cross which marked the spot.

But did these things stop the progress of the Jesuits? The sons of Loyola never retreated. The mission they founded in a tribe ended only with the extinction of the tribe itself. Their lives were made up of fearless devotedness and heroic self-sacrifice. Though sorrowing for the dead, they pressed forward at once to occupy their places, and, if needs be, share their fate. "Nothing"—wrote Father le Petit after describing the martyrdom of two of his brethren—"nothing has happened to these two excellent missionaries for which they were not prepared when they devoted themselves to the Indian Missions." If the flesh trembled, the spirit seemed never to falter. Each one indeed felt that he was "baptized for the dead," and that his own blood, poured out in the mighty forests of the West, would bring down perhaps greater blessings on those for whom he died, than he could win for them by the labors of a life. He realized that he was "appointed unto death." "Ibo, et non redibo," were the prophetic words of Father Jogues, when, for the last time, he departed to the Mohawks. When Lallemand was bound to the stake, and for seventeen hours his excruciating agonies were prolonged, his words of encouragement to his companion were, "Brother! we are made a spectacle unto the world, and to angels, and to men." When Marquette was setting out for the sources of the Mississippi, and the friendly Indians who had known him, wished to turn him from his purpose by declaring "Those distant nations never spare the stran-

gers," the calm reply of the missionary was, "I shall gladly lay down my life for the salvation of souls." And then, the red sons of the wilderness bowed with him in prayer, and before the simple cross of cedar, and among the stately groves of elm and maple which line the St. Lawrence, there rose that old chant which the aged man had been accustomed to hear in the distant Cathedrals of his own land—

"Vexilla Regis prodeunt;
Fulget Crucis mysterium."*

But how little is known of all these men! The history of their bravery and sufferings, touching as it is, has been comparatively neglected. And it is to supply in some degree this deficiency, and to give at least a specimen of what the early Jesuits endured and dared, that this volume has been prepared. It is sent forth merely as a contribution to the historical records of the country. The early Jesuit missions form indeed a page of our history which has never yet been written, and the interest which the writer has taken in them is entirely accidental. During the last year he found in a bookstore in Europe, a set of the "Lettres Edifiantes et Curieuses, Ecrites des Missions Etrangeres," in thirty-four volumes, scattered through which are letters from the Jesuits in our own country. There are but few copies of this work in America, and it is thus rendered inaccessible to most persons, while its size would prevent others from attempting to investigate it. It has therefore remained only as a storehouse from which some of our historians have drawn occasional facts with regard to the early discoveries in our country. Having become interested in reading it, the writer determined to

* The banners of Heaven's king advance,
The mystery of the Cross shines forth.
Bancroft's United States, vol. iii. 156

attempt a literal translation of the letters from our own part of the continent. The notes he has added throughout the work are designated by brackets. The map prefixed is a facsimile of one published by the Jesuits in 1664, and is to be found in the "Relation de ce qui s'est passé en la Nouvelle France, en l'annee 1664."

It would have been easy to have woven the history of some of these missionaries into a romantic and touching narrative, but the writer preferred allowing them to speak for themselves, and to tell their own story. It is more interesting to read the very words these earnest laborers wrote more than a century ago, when camping in the wilderness, or sharing the wigwams of the rude savage. They portray their own views and feelings. They lead us, as no one else does, into the inner and private life of our Aborigines.

Some parts of the volume contain in successive letters the entire missionary life of an individual. Such are the the first two, which give the labors of Rasles as related by himself, while the third, by Father de la Chasse, concludes the account by the narrative of his death. So again, the eighth gives the diary of Father du Poisson from the time of his arrival in New Orleans, until he reached the distant scene of his labors among the Arkansas—the ninth is his own account of his missionary field—and the tenth, by another Jesuit, tells of his martyrdom two years afterwards in the massacre by the Natchez. The fourth letter in this volume, containing the life of the Mohawk maiden whose reputation still lives in the tradition of the North, as the Geneveva of New France, shows how the faith was presented to these savages, and how they received it. The sixth gives us for the first time an account of the expedition of Montcalm, written at the time by an eye-witness, while the journeys of Father Marest over the wide prairies of

Illinois and Michigan, by their romantic interest, we think, will arrest the attention of every reader.

It has ever been through life the object of the writer, to reverence goodness wherever seen and by whatever name it may be called, and therefore he is willing to pay his tribute to the fearless devotedness of these men. His heart can respond with joy to the triumphs they won for the Cross, when the wild tribes of the West bowed to the Emblem of our common faith,* even though he differs widely from them in their theology, and feels that often, as in the case of Catherine, the superstitions and errors of their system broke a noble spirit which might otherwise have lived for years, a light in the wilderness. Yet beautiful, notwithstanding all this, was the life of the Mohawk maiden—beautiful for the faith it showed, and the stern devotion beneath which even the body was crushed,—and sweetly solemn in the ears of the Iroquois must have sounded the *Dies Iræ*, as they slowly bore her remains over the plain of the Madeleine to their last resting-place.

But let not any carry this feeling too far, or from admiration of the romance which gathers around the labors of the Jesuits, feel as if the claim of devotedness was to be confined to them alone. Our own Church has equally her *Acta Sanctorum*, and he who with an unquickened pulse can read the record of her sons who "counted not their lives dear unto themselves," must be sadly wanting

* ——— "The Priest
Believed himself the fables that he taught:
Corrupt their forms, and yet those forms at least
Preserv'd a salutary faith that wrought,
Maugre the alloy, the saving end it sought.
Benevolence had gain'd such empire there,
That even superstition had been brought
An aspect of humanity to wear,
And make the weal of man its first and only care."
Southey's Tale of Paraguay, Cant. iv. 10

in a true appreciation of all that is self-denying and holy. The annals of no Church give a loftier picture of self-sacrifice than that furnished by Henry Martyn, when he abandoned the honors of academic life and exchanged his happy home at Cambridge for the solitary bungalow at Dinapore—the daily disputes with his Moonshee and Pundit—or the bitter opposition of the Mahommedans at Shiraz. And no where do we read of a nobler martyrdom than his, when he lay expiring at Tocat, without a friend to close his eyes or a sympathizing voice to address him. So too it was when Heber left the peaceful retreat of Hodnet, to suffer and die under the burning heats of India, or Selwyn in our day consecrated himself to this cause among the wild savages of New Zealand. But the time would fail us were we to speak of Buchanan, or Thomason, or Middleton, or James, or Corrie,—"these all died in the faith"—or of Wilson, and Spencer, and Broughton, and Carr, who in this generation went out to distant heathen lands, "not knowing the things which should befall them there." Many a humble Missionary indeed, who is now suffering from poverty and an unhealthy climate in our own western wilds, and whose record is written only in Heaven, is "dying daily" and enduring as true a martyrdom for the Gospel's sake, as any Jesuit whose history is given in this volume.

There is one thought however which has constantly occurred to us in the preparation of these letters, and which we cannot but suggest. Look over the world and read the history of the Jesuit missions. After one or two generations they have always come to naught. There is not a recorded instance of their permanency, or their spreading each generation wider and deeper, like our own missions in India. Thus it has been in China, Japan, South America, and our own land. For centuries the Jesuit foreign missionaries have been like those "beating

the air." And yet, greater devotion to the cause than theirs has never been seen since the Apostles' days. Why then was this result? If "the blood of the martyrs be the seed of the Church," why is this the only instance in which it has not proved so? Must there not have been something wrong in the whole system—some grievous errors mingled with their teaching, which thus denied them a measure of success proportioned to their efforts?

The preparation of this volume has formed the relaxation of the writer, when he wished at times to turn from the severer studies of his profession. Probably he should not have ventured to send it to the press, but for the encouragement of one, whose own publications have rendered his name well known to the students of historical research in our country, and who amidst the engrossing cares of active life, can still cultivate those scholar-like tastes and acquirements, which unfortunately are so rare among us. To him therefore the writer felt he could most appropriately inscribe this volume.

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MISSIONARY LIFE AMONG THE ABNAKIS.

1722.

LETTER I.

FROM FATHER SEBASTIEN RASLES,* MISSIONARY OF THE SOCIETY OF JESUS IN NEW FRANCE, TO MONSIEUR, HIS NEPHEW.

At Nanrantsouak,† this 15th of October, 1722.

MONSIEUR, MY DEAR NEPHEW,

The Peace of our Lord be with you:

During the more than thirty years that I have passed in the depth of the forests with the Savages, I have been so occupied in instructing them, and training them to Christian virtues, that I have scarcely had time to write many letters, even to those who are most dear to me. I cannot, however refuse you the little detail of my occupations for which you ask. I owe it, indeed, to the gratitude I feel for the strong interest which your friendship induces you to take in all that concerns me.

I am in a district of that vast extent of country which is between Acadia and New England. Two other Missionaries, as well as myself, are engaged there among the *Abnakis*‡ Indians,

[* Charlevoix writes the name *Rasles*. The early New England historians spell it *Ralle*, while the missionary himself in a letter of Nov. 1712, signs it *Rale*. The latter form has been adopted by Francis in his Life. See p. 164.]

[† Now *Norridgwock* in Maine. The little Indian village was near the present site of this town, on a beautiful bend of the river.]

[‡ The meaning of this Indian word is, "Men of the East," and it was a name formerly given to all the tribes on the Eastern coast of the continent, but afterwards restricted to those inhabiting Nova Scotia, the territory of the present state of Maine, and a part of Canada. *Francis' Life of Rale*,

but we are separated very far from each other. The *Abnakis* Indians, besides the two villages which they have in the midst of the French colony, have also three other considerable settlements on the borders of a river. There are three rivers which empty into the sea, to the south of Canada, between New England and Acadia.

The village in which I live is called *Nanrantsouak*, and is situated on the banks of a river which empties into the sea, at the distance of thirty leagues below. I have erected a Church there, which is neat and elegantly ornamented. I have, indeed, thought it my duty to spare nothing either in the decoration of the building itself, or in the beauty of those articles which are used in our holy ceremonies. Vestments, chasubles, copes, and holy vessels, all are highly appropriate, and would be esteemed so even in our Churches in Europe. I have also formed a little choir of about forty young Indians, who assist at Divine Service in cassocks and surplices. They have each their own appropriate functions, as much to serve in the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass as to chant the Divine Offices for the consecration of the Holy Sacrament, and for the processions which they make with great crowds of Indians, who often come from a long distance to engage in these exercises; and you would be edified by the beautiful order they observe and the devotion they show.*

p. 166. In all cases through this volume the orthography of proper names has been strictly preserved, as written by the Jesuits. It is interesting sometimes to see the changes through which names have since passed.]

[*The following extract from Whittier's beautiful poem of *Mogg Megone* places before us the scene which in those days must have been witnessed on the spot:—

"On the brow of a hill, which slopes to meet
The flowing river, and bathe its feet—
The bare-washed rock, and the drooping grass,
And the creeping vine as the waters pass—
A rude and unshapely chapel stands,
Built up in that wild by unskilled hands;

They have built two Chapels at three hundred paces distance from the village; the one, which is dedicated to the Holy Virgin, and where can be seen her image in relief, is above on the river; the other, which is dedicated to the Guardian Angel, is below, on the same river. As they are both on the road which leads either into the woods or into the fields, the Indians can never pass without offering up their prayers. There is a holy emulation among the females of the village, as to who shall most ornament the Chapel of which they have care, when the procession is to take place there: all who have any jewelry, or pieces of silk or calico, or other things of that kind, employ them to adorn it.

The great blaze of light contributes not a little to the beauty of the Church and of the Chapels, it not being necessary for me to be saving of the wax, for the country itself furnishes it abundantly. The islands of the sea are bordered by a kind of wild laurel which in autumn produces a berry a little like that borne by the juniper. They fill their kettles with these, and boil them with water. In proportion as the water thickens, the green wax rises to the surface, where it remains. From a measure of about

Yet the traveller knows it a place of prayer,
For the holy sign of the Cross is there;
And should he chance at that place to be,
Of a Sabbath morn, or some hallowed day,
When prayers are made and masses are said,
Some for the living, and some for the dead,—
Well might the traveller start to see
The tall dark forms, that take their way
From the birch canoe, on the river shore,
And the forest paths, to that chapel door;
And marvel to mark the naked knees
And the dusky foreheads bending these,—
And, stretching his long thin arms over these
In blessing and in prayer,
Like a shrouded spectre, pale and tall,
In his coarse white vesture, Father Ralle!"]

three bushels of this berry, can be made almost four pounds of wax; it is very pure and beautiful, but neither sweet nor pliable. After several trials I have found, that by mingling with it an equal quantity of fat, either of beef or mutton, or of the elk, beautiful tapers can be made, firm, and excellent for use. With twenty-four pounds of wax and as much of fat, can be made two hundred tapers of more than a foot in length. A vast quantity of these laurels are found on the islands and on the borders of the sea, so that one person in a day can easily gather four measures, or twelve bushels of the berry. It hangs down like grapes from the branches of the tree. I have sent one branch of it to Quebec, together with a cake of the wax, and it has been found to be very excellent.

None of my neophytes fail to repair twice in each day to the Church, early in the morning to hear Mass, and in the evening to assist at the prayers, which I offer up at sunset. As it is necessary to fix the imagination of these Indians, which is too easily distracted, I have composed some appropriate prayers for them to make, to enable them to enter into the spirit of the august sacrifice of our altars. They chant them, or else recite them in a loud voice during Mass. Besides the Sermons which I deliver before them on Sundays and festival-days, I scarcely pass a week-day without making a short exhortation to inspire them with a horror of those vices to which they are most addicted, or to strengthen them in the practice of some virtue.

After the Mass, I teach the Catechism to the children and young persons, while a large number of aged people, who are present, assist and answer with perfect docility the questions which I put to them. The rest of the morning, even to mid-day, is set apart for seeing those who wish to speak with me. They come to me in crowds, to make me a participator in their pains and inquietudes, or to communicate to me causes of complaint against their countrymen, or to consult me on their marriages

and other affairs of importance. It is, therefore, necessary for me to instruct some, to console others, to re-establish peace in families at variance, to calm troubled consciences, to correct others by reprimands mingled with softness and charity; in fine, as far as it is possible, to render them all contented.

After mid-day, I visit the sick and go round among the cabins of those who require more particular instructions. If they hold a council, which is often the case with these Indians, they depute one of the principal men of the assembly to ask me to assist in their deliberations. I accordingly repair to the place where their council is held; if I think that they are pursuing a wise course, I approve of it; if, on the contrary, I have anything to say in opposition to their decision, I declare my sentiments, supporting them by weighty reasons, to which they conform. My advice always fixes their resolutions. They do not even hold their feasts without inviting me. Those who have been asked carry each one a dish, of wood or bark to the place of entertainment. I give the benediction on the food, and they place in each dish the portion which has been prepared. After this distribution has been made I say grace, and each one retires; for such is the order and usage of their feasts.

In the midst of such continual occupations, you cannot imagine with what rapidity the days pass by. There have been seasons, when I scarcely had time to recite my Office, or to take a little repose during the night; for discretion is not a virtue which particularly belongs to the Indians. But for some years past I have made it a rule, not to speak with any person from the prayers in the evening until the time of mass on the next morning. I have therefore forbidden them to interrupt me during this period, except for some very important reason, as, for example, to assist a person who is dying, or some other affair of the kind which it is impossible to put off. I set apart this time to spend in prayer, or to repose myself from the fatigues of the day.

When the Indians repair to the sea-shore, where they pass some months in hunting the ducks, bustards, and other birds, which are found there in large numbers, they build on an island a Church, which they cover with bark, and near it they erect a little cabin for my residence. I take care to transport thither a part of our ornaments, and the service is performed with the same decency and the same crowds of people as at the village.

You see then, my dear nephew, what are my occupations. For that which relates to me personally I will say to you, that I neither hear, nor see, nor speak to any but the Indians. My food is very simple and light. I have never been able to conform my taste to the meat or the smoked fish of the savages, and my nourishment is only composed of corn which they pound, and of which I make each day a kind of hominy, which I boil in water. The only luxury in which I indulge is a little sugar, which I mix with it to correct its insipidity. This is never wanting in the forest. In the Spring, the maple trees contain a liquor very similar to that which is found in the sugar canes of the Southern Islands. The women employ themselves in collecting this in vessels of bark, as it is distilled from the trees. They then boil it, and draw off from it a very good sugar. That which is drawn off first is always the most beautiful.

The whole nation of the Abnakis is Christian, and very zealous to preserve their religion. This attachment to the Catholic faith, has induced them, even to this time, to prefer our alliance, to advantages which might be derived from an alliance with the English who are their neighbors. These advantages would be too of very great importance to our Indians. The facility of trading with the English, from whom they are distant but one or two days' journey, the ease with which the journey can be made, the admirable market they would find there for the purchase of the merchandise which suits them: these things certainly hold out very great inducements. In place of which, in going to

Quebec, it is necessary to take more than a fortnight to reach there, they have to furnish themselves with provisions for the journey, they have different rivers to pass, and frequent portages to make.* They are aware of these inconveniences, and are by no means indifferent to their interests, but their faith is infinitely more dear to them, and they believe that if they detach themselves from our alliance, they will shortly find themselves without a missionary, without sacraments, without a sacrifice, with scarcely any exercise of their religion, and in manifest danger of being replunged into their former heathenism. This is the bond which unites them to the French. Attempts have been vainly made to break it, sometimes by wiles which were held out to their simplicity, and sometimes by acts of violence, which could not fail to irritate a nation exceedingly jealous of its rights and liberties. The commencement of this misunderstanding could not but alarm me, for it made me fear the dispersion of that little community which Providence had for so many years confided to my care, and for the sake of which I would willingly sacrifice what remains to me of life. Let me mention to you then some of the different artifices to which the English had recourse to detach them from our alliance.

The Governor-general of New England, some years ago, sent to the lower part of the river, the most able of the ministers of Boston,† to establish there a school to instruct the children of the Indians, and maintain them at the expence of the govern-

* To make a portage is to transport their canoe and baggage from one river to another, with which it has no communication. These portages are sometimes of many leagues, and it is the principal reason which induces the Indians to use canoes of bark, since they are very light and easily transported.

[† This, as we learn from his Journal, which is still preserved in Boston, was the Rev. Joseph Baxter of Medfield, Mass. He graduated at Harvard College in 1693, and had a high reputation in the colony at that time.]

ment. As the pay of the minister was to increase in proportion to the number of scholars, he neglected nothing which could attract them. He went himself to seek them out; he caressed them; he made them little presents; he pressed them to come and see him; in fine, he gave himself the trouble of many useless manœuvres during two months, without being able to gain a single child. The contempt which they showed for his caresses and his invitations did not repulse him. He therefore addressed himself to the Indians themselves; he put to them different questions with regard to their belief, and on hearing the answers they made, he turned into ridicule the Sacraments, Purgatory, the Invocation of Saints, the Rosary, the Cross and Images, the lighting of our Churches, and all those practices of piety so sacredly observed in the Catholic religion.

I thought it my duty to oppose these first seeds of seduction, and therefore wrote a frank letter to the minister, in which I remarked to him, that my Christians knew how to believe the verities the Catholic faith set forth, but were not able disputants; that since they were not sufficiently learned to resolve the difficulties he had proposed, he apparently had intended they should be communicated to me, and that I therefore would avail myself with pleasure of this occasion which offered, to confer with him either orally or by letters; that with this I would send him a manuscript, which I would beg him to read with serious attention. In this manuscript, which was about a hundred pages in length, I proved from Scripture, from tradition, and from theological arguments, those truths which he had attacked with so much misplaced pleasantry. I added also, in finishing my letter, that if he was not satisfied with my proofs, I should expect from him a refutation precise and sustained by theological arguments, not by vague reasons which proved nothing, still less by injurious reflections, which were neither suited to our profession, nor to the importance of the subjects in dispute.

Two days after he had received my letter, he departed to return to Boston, sending me a short answer, which I was obliged to read over many times before I could comprehend its meaning, the style was so obscure and the Latin so extraordinary. I comprehended at last, by dint of study, that he complained I had attacked him without reason; that zeal for the salvation of their souls had led him to show the way to Heaven to these Indians, and that, for the rest, my proofs were childish and ridiculous. Having sent to him at Boston a second letter, in which I set forth his blunders,* he answered me at the end of two years, without entering into the subject in dispute, merely declaring that I exhibited a spirit jealous and critical, and which bore the marks of a temperament inclined to be choleric.† Thus terminated our dispute, which banished the minister, and obliged him to abandon the project he had formed of seducing away my neophytes.

This first attempt having met with so little success, they had recourse to another artifice. An Englishman asked permission of the Indians to build on their river a kind of storehouse, to enable him to trade with them, and he promised to sell them his goods at a much more favorable rate even than they could purchase in Boston. The Indians, who found it for their advantage, and were thus spared the trouble of a journey to Boston, willing-

[* He found fault with *amicus*, used as an adjective instead of a substantive: with *merere*, which should have been the deponent *mereri;* with *mola*, in the sense of a *mill* instead of a *millstone;* with *domus* for the accusative plural, which, the critic asserted, should be *domos*, and the like."—*Francis' Life*, p. 258.]

[† Dr. Francis says, he has seen this letter, which was in the possession of a connection of the Baxter family. It was either a copy kept by Mr. Baxter, or was sent back to him after the seizure of Rale's papers. It has now been placed among the papers of the Mass. Hist. Society. In it the writer gives a stout defence of his grammar, and then, "turns the edge of the critical knife upon Rale's own style."]

ly consented. Another Englishman, a short time afterwards, asked the same permission, offering conditions even more advantageous than the first. It was accorded to him with equal willingness. This easiness of the Indians emboldened the English to establish themselves on the whole length of the river, without even asking permission, and they built their houses there, and erected their forts, three of which were of stone.

This proximity of the English was at first a source of pleasure to the Indians, who did not perceive the snare which had been laid for them, and who only looked at the satisfaction they experienced in finding their new guests to be all they could desire. But at length, seeing themselves insensibly surrounded, as it were, by the habitations of the English, they began to open their eyes and to feel a mistrust. They demanded of the English, by what right they thus established themselves on their lands, and even erected their forts there. The answer which they received, that the King of France had ceded their country to the King of England, threw them into the greatest alarm; for there is no Indian nation but suffers most impatiently what they regard as subjection to any other power, whatever it may be; they term them indeed their allies, but nothing more. The Indians, therefore, immediately despatched some of their number to M. le Marquis de Vaudreuil, Governor-general of New France, to learn whether it was true that the king had thus indeed disposed of a country of which he was not the master. It was not difficult to calm their disquietude, for it was only necessary to explain to them the articles of the treaty of Utrecht, which related to the Indians, and they appeared content.

About this time a score of Indians had one day entered the dwelling of one of the English, either for the purpose of traffic, or to repose themselves. They had been there but a short time, when they saw the house suddenly surrounded by a company of nearly two hundred armed men. "We are lost," said one of

them; "let us sell our lives dearly." They were preparing therefore to rush forth upon the company, when the English, perceiving their resolution, and knowing besides of what the savage is capable in the first burst of his fury, endeavored to appease them, assuring them that they had no evil design, and that they only came to invite some of them to return with them to Boston to confer with the Governor, on the means of cherishing the peace and good intelligence which ought to subsist between the two nations. The Indians, a little too credulous, deputed four of their countrymen who should return with them to Boston, but when they arrived there, the conference with which they were amused ended in retaining them as prisoners.

You will be surprised, without doubt, that so small a handful of Indians should have pretended to make head against so numerous a company as that of the English. But our Indians have performed an infinite number of actions which are much more hardy. I will relate to you one only, from which you may judge of the others.

During the late wars, a party of thirty Indians were returning from a hostile expedition against the English. As the Indians, and particularly the Abnakis, are entirely unacquainted with guarding against surprises, they slept at their first stopping-place, without even thinking to post a sentinel during the night. A party of six hundred English, commanded by a colonel, pursued them even to their *cabanage*,* and finding them buried in sleep, he surrounded them with his company, promising himself that not one of them should escape him. One of the Indians having awakened, and perceiving the English troops, immediately gave notice to his countrymen by crying out according to their custom, "We are lost; let us sell our lives dearly!" Their resolution

* This is the name by which the Indians call their place of encampment. When they go to war or to the chase, their first care on arriving at the place where they intend to repose, is to erect their cabins.

was very soon taken. Forming themselves instantly into six parties of five men each, with the hatchet in one hand and the knife in the other, they threw themselves on the English with so much impetuosity and fury, that after having killed more than sixty men, in which number was their colonel, they put the rest to flight.

The Abnakis were no sooner informed of the manner in which their countrymen were treated at Boston, than they complained bitterly, that in the midst of a peace which was existing, they should in this way have violated the rights of nations. The English answered, that they only retained the prisoners as hostages for an injury which had been done in killing some cattle belonging to them; and that as soon as they repaired this damage, which amounted to two hundred pounds of beaver-skins, the prisoners should be released. Although the Abnakis were not convinced of the existence of this pretended damage, yet they did not hesitate to pay the two hundred pounds of beaver, not wishing at all, for so small an affair, that any should be able to reproach them with having abandoned their brethren. Yet, notwithstanding the payment of this contested debt, they refused to set the prisoners at liberty.

The Governor of Boston, fearing lest this refusal would drive the Indians to the perpetration of some bold stroke, proposed to hold a conference for the purpose of treating this affair in a spirit of conciliation. They even agreed on the day and the place where it should be held. The Indians repaired thither with Father Rasles, their missionary. Father de la Chasse, Superior General of the Missions, who made them at this time a visit, went also; but Monsieur the Governor did not appear. The Indians drew unfavorable inferences from his absence, and took measures to acquaint him with their sentiments by means of a letter, written in their own tongue, in English, and in Latin, which Father de la Chasse, who was acquainted with these three languages, was

charged to prepare. It of course appeared useless to employ any other language but the English, yet the Father was well satisfied that it should be so, because on the one hand, the Indians would know for themselves that the letter contained nothing but what they had dictated, and on the other hand, the English would have no reason to doubt, but that the translation into their own language was a faithful one. The amount of the letter was this: 1st. That the Indians could not comprehend, why they still retained their countrymen in irons, after the promise which had been given to restore them to liberty as soon as the two hundred pounds of beaver were paid. 2d. That they were no less surprised to see that they had seized on their country without permission. 3d. That the English should leave it as soon as possible, and also release the prisoners; that they would await their answer for two months, and if after that time they should refuse to give them any satisfaction, they would then know how to obtain justice for themselves.

It was in the month of July, of the year 1721, that this letter was carried to Boston by some English who had assisted at the Conference. As the two months passed without bringing any answer from Boston, and besides, the English ceased to sell to the Abnakis powder, and lead, and provisions, as they had done before this dispute, our Indians were disposed to make reprisals. It required all the influence which the Marquis de Vaudreuil possessed over their minds, to induce them as yet for some time to suspend the violence they meditated.

But their patience was pushed to an extreme by two acts of hostility which the English perpetrated in the end of December, 1721, and in the beginning of the year 1722. The first was their carrying off M. de Saint-Casteins. This officer was a Lieutenant in our army. His mother was an Abnakis Indian, and he had always lived among the Indians, whose esteem and confidence he had won to such a degree, that they had chosen him their Com-

mander General. In this capacity he could not excuse himself from assisting at the conference of which I have spoken, where he interested himself in promoting the interests of the Abnakis, his countrymen. The English charged this on him as a crime, and despatched a small vessel to the place of his residence. The captain took care to conceal his people, with the exception of two or three men whom he left on the deck. Having invited M. de Saint-Casteins, with whom he was acquainted, to come on board and take some refreshments, the latter having no reason to distrust him accepted it and repaired thither without any attendants. But scarcely had he arrived, when they set sail and carried him off to Boston. There, they placed him on the prisoner's stand, and questioned him as a criminal. They demanded of him among other things, why, and in what capacity he had assisted at the conference which was held with the Indians; what was the meaning of the uniform which he wore; and whether he had not been sent to that assembly by the Governor of Canada. M. de Saint-Casteins answered, that he was an Abnakis on his mother's side: that his whole life had been spent among the Indians; that his countrymen having elected him chief of their nation, he was obliged to attend their councils, to sustain their interests there; that it was in this capacity only that he had assisted at the last conference; that for the rest, the dress which he wore was not at all a uniform, as they had imagined; that it was in truth appropriate and sufficiently ornamented, but not above his rank, independently even of the honor which he had to be an officer in our army.

Monsieur, our Governor, having been apprised of the detention of M. de Saint-Casteins, wrote immediately to the Governor of Boston to make his complaints to him. He did not receive any answer to his letter, but as the time drew near when the English Governor expected to receive a second one, he set the prisoner

at liberty, after having held him in confinement during five months.

An enterprise of the English against myself, was the second act of hostility which completed the work of irritating to excess the Abnakis nation. A missionary can hardly fail of being an object of hatred to these gentlemen. The love of religion, which he endeavors to engraven in the hearts of the Indians, is the most efficient means of retaining these neophytes in an alliance, and removing them from that of the English. They therefore regarded me as an invincible obstacle in the way of the design they had formed of extending themselves over the lands of the Abnakis, and thus gradually becoming masters of the region which lies between New England and Acadia. They have often endeavored to carry me off from my flock, and more than once a price has been set upon my head. It was towards the end of January in the year 1722, that they made a new attempt, which, however, had no other result than to make manifest the ill will they bore me.

I had remained alone in the village, with only a small number of old men and infirm persons, while the rest of the Indians were at the hunting-grounds. The opportunity seemed to them a favorable one to surprise me, and with this view they sent out a detachment of two hundred men.* Two young Abnakis who were engaged in the chase along the sea-shore, learned that the English had entered the river, and they immediately turned their steps in that direction to observe their progress. Having perceived them at ten leagues distance from the village, they outstripped them in traversing the country to give me warning, and to cause the old men, the females, and infants to retire in haste. I had barely time to swallow the consecrated wafers, to crowd the sacred vessels into a little chest, and to save myself in the woods. The English arrived in the evening at the village, and

[* This was Colonel Westbrook's expedition.]

not having found me, came the following morning to search for me, even in the very place to which we had retreated. They were scarcely a gun-shot distant when we perceived them, and all I could do was to hide myself with precipitation in the depths of the forest. But as I had not time to take my snow-shoes, and, besides, had considerable weakness remaining from a fall which took place some years before, when my thigh and leg were broken, it was not possible for me to fly very far. The only resource which remained to me was to conceal myself behind a tree. They began immediately to examine the different paths worn by the Indians, when they went to collect wood, and they penetrated even to within eight paces of the tree which concealed me. From this spot it would seem as if they must inevitably discover me, for the trees were stripped of their leaves; but as if they had been restrained by an invisible hand, they immediately retraced their steps, and repaired again to the village.

It is thus that, through the particular protection of God, I escaped from their hands. They pillaged my Church and humble dwelling,* and thus almost reduced me to a death by famine in the

[* Among other papers seized at this time was his *Dictionary of the Abnaki Language*, on which he had been for years employed. "The original manuscript, carefully preserved in strong binding, is now in the library of Harvard College. It is a quarto volume in Rale's own handwriting. On the first leaf is the following note, written by him in 1691. 'Il y a un an que je suis parmi les sauvages; je commence a mettre en ordre, en forme de dictionnaire, les mots que j'apprens.'.... The work is divided into two parts. The first is a dictionary of the Abnaki dialect, in French and Indian, the French word or phrase being given first, and then the corresponding Indian expression, generally, though not uniformly, in distinct columns. Two hundred and five leaves, a comparatively small part of which have writing on both sides, and the remainder on one side only, make up this part. The second part has twenty five leaves, both sides of which are generally filled with writing. It is called *Particulæ*, on account of the *particles*, the Indian words being placed first, and the explanations given in

midst of the woods. It is true, that as soon as they learned my adventure in Quebec, they immediately sent me provisions; but these could not arrive until very late, and during all that time I was obliged to live destitute of all succor and in extreme need.

These repeated insults induced the Indians to conclude, that they had no further answer to expect, and that it was time to repulse violence, and to cause open force to take the place of pacific negociations. On their return from the hunting-grounds, and after having planted their fields, they formed the resolution to destroy the habitations which the English had lately built, and to remove far from them these unquiet and troublesome guests, who were encroaching by degrees upon their lands, and who meditated bringing them entirely into subjection. They sent messengers to the different villages to interest them in their cause, and to engage their aid in the necessity they were under of making a right defence The deputation met with success. They chanted the war-song among the Hurons of Lorette, and in all the villages of the Abnakis nation. *Nanrantsouak* was the place

French or Latin. One can scarcely look at this important manuscript, with its dingy and venerable leaves, without associations of deep interest with those labors, and that life in the wilderness, of which it is now the only memorial..... The dictionary was printed in 1833, in the first volume of the new series of the Memoirs of the American Academy, under the care and direction of Mr. John Pickering, who furnished it with an introduction and notes, which enhance its value." *Francis' Life of Rale, p.* 294.

"The 'strong-box' which contained his papers and inkstand, is also preserved. It is of a curious and complicated construction. In the lower part is a secret drawer or compartment, to which one unacquainted with the manner of opening it can scarcely find access without breaking the box. On the inside of the lid are pasted two engravings, in a rude style, representing the scourging of Jesus and the crowning with thorns. The box after long continuing in the possession of Col. Westbrook's family, has been deposited by one of his descendants in the collection of the Mass. Hist. Society." *Francis' Life, p.* 299.]

appointed for the assembling of the warriors, to settle their plans by mutual concert.

In the meanwhile the *Nanrantsouakians* descended the river, and having arrived at its mouth, they seized three or four little vessels belonging to the English. After again ascending the same river, they pillaged and burnt the new dwellings which the English had erected there. They, however, abstained from all violence towards the inhabitants, even permitting them to retire to their own people, with the exception of five whom they retained as hostages until their countrymen had been given up, who were now detained in the prisons at Boston. This moderation of the Indians, however, had not the desired effect. On the contrary, a party of the English having found sixteen Abnakis asleep on an island, made a general discharge on them, by which five were killed and three wounded.

This is a new signal of the war which is about to break out between the English and the Indians. The latter do not in any way expect aid from the French, on account of the peace which exists between the two nations; but they have a resource in all the other Indian nations, who will not fail to enter into their quarrel, and to take up their defence.

My neophytes, touched by the peril to which I found myself exposed in their village, often urged me to retire for a time to Quebec. But what will become of the flock, if it be deprived of its shepherd? They have done what they could to represent to me, that in case I should fall into the hands of our enemies, the least which could possibly happen to me would be to languish for the rest of my days in a hard prison. But I close their lips with the words of the Apostle, which divine goodness has deeply engraven on my heart. "Do not at all distress yourselves," I say to them, "as to what concerns me. I do not in the least fear the threats of those who hate me without a cause, 'and I count not my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course,

and the ministry which I have received of the Lord Jesus.'" Pray for me, my dear nephew, that He will strengthen in me those sentiments which can have their origin only from His mercy, to the end that I may have power to live and die without ceasing to labor for the salvation of these neglected souls, who are the price of His blood, and whom he condescended to commit to my care.

THE WANDERINGS OF FATHER RASLES.

1689—1723.

LETTER II.

FROM FATHER SEBASTIEN RASLES, MISSIONARY OF THE SOCIETY OF JESUS IN NEW FRANCE, TO MONSIEUR HIS BROTHER.

At Nanrantsouak, this 12th of October, 1723.

MONSIEUR, MY VERY DEAR BROTHER,

The Peace of our Lord be with you :

I CANNOT longer resist the kind entreaties which you make in your letters, that I would inform you a little in detail with regard to my occupations, and the character of the Indian tribes among which Providence has for so many years cast my lot. I do so the more willingly, because I know that in conforming to desires so urgent on your part, I shall gratify your affection even more than your curiosity.

It was on the 23d of July in the year 1689, that I embarked at Rochelle, and after a pleasant voyage of three months, arrived at Quebec on the 13th of October in the same year. I at once applied myself to learn the language of our Indians. Their language is indeed very difficult, for it is not sufficient to study its terms and their signification, or to make a collection of words and phrases; it is necessary also to know the idiomatic turns and arrangements which the Indians give them, which it is scarcely possible to acquire except by intercourse and frequent association with these people.

I then went to live in a village of the Abnakis nation, situated in a forest which is but three leagues from Quebec. This village was inhabited by two hundred Indians, almost all of whom were

Christians. Their cabins were arranged nearly like the houses in a town, while around them was an enclosure of stakes high and thick, forming a kind of wall, which they had constructed to protect them from the incursions of their enemies.

Their cabins are easily built. They plant poles in the earth, which they join at the top, and then cover them with large pieces of bark. The fire they make in the middle of the cabin, and all around it they place mats formed of reeds, on which they sit during the day, and sleep at night.

The dress of the men consists of a loose robe of skin, or else of a piece of red or blue cloth. That of the women is one covering, which hangs from the neck to the middle of the leg, and which they arrange with a great deal of propriety. They place another covering on the head, which descends even to their feet, and serves them for a cloak. Their stockings extend only from the knee to the ankle. Moccasins made of the skin of deer and lined in the inside with hair or wool, serve them in place of shoes. This moccasin is absolutely necessary to enable them to wear their snow-shoes, by means of which they walk with ease on the snow. These snow-shoes, made in the shape of a lozenge, are more than two feet in length, and one and a half in breadth. I did not think that I should ever be able to walk with such machines; but when I made the attempt, I found myself immediately so expert, that the Indians could not believe it was the first time I had used them.

The invention of these snow-shoes is of great use to the Indians, not only to enable them to run on the snow, with which the earth is covered the greater part of the year, but also to go in pursuit of game, and particularly of the elks. These animals, which are larger than the largest bullocks of France, can walk with difficulty through the snow. It is thus easy for the Indians to come up with them, and they often kill them with only a knife attached to the end of a stick. They feed on their flesh, and

after having well-dressed their skins, in which they are very skilful, they use them as articles of traffic with the French and English. From them they receive in exchange, their cloth dresses and blankets, their kettles, their guns, their hatchets and knives.

To give you an idea of an Indian, imagine to yourself a large man, powerful, active, of a swarthy complexion, without beard, with black hair, and his teeth whiter than ivory. If you wish to see him in all his finery, you will find that he has no other ornaments but beads; these are a kind of shell or stone, which they form into the shape of little grains, some white and others black, which they string together in such a way as to represent different showy figures with great exactness. It is with these beads that our Indians bind up and plat their hair on their ears and behind; they make of them pendents for the ears, collars, garters, large sashes of five or six inches in breadth, and on these kinds of ornaments they pride themselves much more than a European would on all his gold and jewelry.

The occupation of the men is in the chase or in war; that of the women is to remain in the village, and to manufacture there with bark baskets, sacks, boxes, dishes, platters, &c. They sew the bark with fibres of roots, and in this way make various articles for household use, very admirably constructed. Their canoes are made in like manner of bark alone, but the largest can scarcely contain more than six or seven persons.

It is with these canoes made of bark, which is scarcely thicker than a crown piece, that they cross the arms of the sea, and navigate the most dangerous rivers and lakes four or five hundred leagues around. I have thus made many voyages without having run any risk. On one single occasion only, it happened that in crossing the river St. Lawrence, I suddenly found myself surrounded by heaps of ice of enormous magnitude, among which the canoe was wedged. The two Indians who conducted me at

once cried out, "We are lost; it is all over; we must perish." Nevertheless, making an effort, they leaped on one of the cakes of floating ice. I followed their example, and after having drawn up the canoe, we carried it to the extremity of this piece of ice. There it was necessary again to embark in the canoe for the purpose of gaining another cake of ice; and thus, by leaping from cake to cake, we at length reached the bank of the river, without any other inconvenience than that of being very wet and benumbed with the cold.

Nothing can equal the tenderness which the Indians exhibit towards their children. As soon as they are born, they place them on a little piece of board, covered with cloth and a small bear-skin, in which they wrap them, and this is their cradle. Their mothers carry them on their backs, in a manner convenient both for the infants and themselves.

No sooner have the children begun to walk, than they exercise them in using the bow, and in this they become so skilful that at ten or twelve years of age they scarcely ever fail to kill the bird at which they aim. I was very much surprised, and should have had difficulty in believing it, if I had not myself been a witness of their skill.

That which was most revolting to me when I commenced living with the Indians was, the necessity of taking my meals with them. Nothing could be more disgusting. After having filled their kettle with victuals, they place it on to boil for about three quarters of an hour, after which they take it off the fire, and serve it up on dishes of bark, dividing it among all those who are in the cabin. Each one then eats his food as he would a piece of bread. This sight did not give me much appetite, and they soon perceived my repugnance. "Why do you not eat?" they asked me. I answered, that I was not accustomed to eat my food thus, without adding to it a little piece of bread. "It is necessary for you to overcome this," said they. "Is it so difficult for a Father who

understands Prayer* perfectly? We, on our part, have difficulties to get over, in order to have faith in what we cannot see." There was then no room for hesitation, for it was necessary to conform to their manners and customs, to the end that I might gain their confidence and win them to Jesus Christ.

Their meals are not regular, as is the European custom, for they live from hand to mouth. As long as they have anything with which to make a good entertainment, they avail themselves of it, without giving themselves any concern as to how they shall live on the following days.

They are passionately fond of tobacco. Men, women, and children smoke almost incessantly. The gift of a small piece of tobacco confers more pleasure upon them than the present of their weight in gold.

In the commencement of June, and when the snow is almost all melted, they plant the *skamgnar*, which is the name by which they call the Turkish or Indian corn. Their way of planting it is, to make with their fingers, or with a small stick, different holes in the earth, and to throw in each eight or nine grains, which they cover with the same earth that they have taken out to make the hole. Their harvest takes place in the end of August.

It is among these people, who are esteemed to be less barbarous than all the rest of the Indians, that I passed my novitiate as a missionary. My first occupation was to learn their language, which is very difficult to acquire, particularly when one has no other instructors than the Indians themselves. They have many guttural sounds which are only uttered with the throat, without making any movement with the lips. *Ou*, for example, is of this number, and therefore in writing it, we mark it by the character 8, to distinguish it from other sounds. I passed one part of the

[*It will be remembered that by the *Prayer*, they mean Christianity or the faith generally. This explanation will be found some pages further on in this same letter.]

day in their cabins hearing them talk; and it was necessary for me to pay the most particular attention, to combine what they said, and conjecture its signification. Sometimes I guessed rightly, but most often I failed, because, not being at all accustomed to the management of their guttural sounds, I only repeated a part of the word, and thus furnished them with occasion for laughter.

At last, after five months of constant application, I had advanced so far as to understand their terms, but this was not sufficient to enable me to express myself according to their taste; much, therefore, remained for me to do, to acquire the turn and genius of the language, which is entirely different from the turn and genius of our languages in Europe. To shorten the time, and place myself more in a state to exercise my functions, I made choice of some Indians who had the most mind, and who spoke best. I told them in my imperfect way some articles of the Catechism, and they rendered them for me into all the niceties of their language. I immediately committed them to paper, and by this means in a very short time I made for myself a dictionary, and a catechism which contained the principles and mysteries of our religion.

It cannot be denied that the language of the Indians has its real beauties, and a certain indescribable energy in the turn and manner of expression. I will give you an example of this. If I should ask *you*, Why God has created you? You would answer me, That I might know him, love him, and serve him, and by this means procure eternal glory. But should I put the same question to an Indian, he would answer in this way, according to their manner of expression: Thus thought the Great Spirit concerning us; Let them know me, let them honor me, let them love me, and obey me; that then I may cause them to enter into my wonderful felicity. If I wish to say in their style, that you will find difficulty in learning the Indian language, see how it will be

necessary for me to express myself: I think of my dear brother, that he will find difficulty in learning the Indian language.

The Huron is the chief language of these Indians, and when one has acquired it, in less than three months he will be able to understand that of the five Iroquois nations. It is the most dignified, and, at the same time, the most difficult of all the Indian languages. This difficulty arises not only from their guttural letters, but much more from the difference of accent; for often two words composed of the same letters have entirely different significations. Father Chaumont, who has lived fifty years among the Hurons, has composed a grammar which is very useful to those who have newly arrived in this mission. Nevertheless, a missionary is fortunate, if even with this aid, he is able, after ten years of constant toil, to express himself elegantly in their language.

Each Indian nation has its own particular language. Thus, the Abnakis, the Hurons, the Iroquois, the Algonkins, the Illinois, the Miamis, &c., have each their language. There are no books at all with which to learn these languages, and if there were, they would be almost useless; practice is the only master which can instruct us. As I have labored in four different missions of the Indians; that is to say, among the Abnakis, the Algonkins, the Hurons, and the Illinois, and have been obliged to acquire their different languages, I will give you a specimen, that you may know how little resemblance there is between them. I have chosen the strophe of a hymn of the Holy Sacrament, which they ordinarily chant during the mass, at the elevation of the Host, and which begins with these words: "O salutaris Hostia." Here follows the translation in verse of this strophe in the four languages of these different nations.

In the Abnakis Language.

Kighist ꞩi-nuanurꞩinns
Spem kik papili go ii damek

Nemeani ꝛi kꝛidan ghabenk
Taha saii grihine.

In the Algonkin Language.

Kꝛerais Jesus tegꝛsenam
Nera ꝛeul ka stisian
Ka rio vllighe miang
Vas mama vik umong.

In the Huron Language.

Jesꝛs ꝛto etti x'ichie
8to etti skuaalichi-axe
J chierche axera-ꝛensta
D'aotierti xeata-ꝛien.

In the Illinois Language.

Pekiziane manet ꝛe
Piaro nile hi nanghi
Keninama ꝛi ꝛ kangha
Mero ꝛinang ꝛsiang hi.

The meaning of these lines is this: "O saving Sacrifice, who art continually offered, and who givest life, thou by whom we enter Heaven, we are constantly assailed, O strengthen us!"

After having lived nearly two years among the Abnakis, I was recalled by my superiors. They destined me to the mission among the Illinois, who had lost their missionary. I repaired, therefore, to Quebec, where, after having spent three months in studying the Algonkin language, I embarked on the 13th of August in a canoe, to go to the Illinois, whose country is more than eight hundred leagues distance from Quebec. You can easily imagine, that so long a voyage in these barbarous regions, was not performed without running great risks and suffering many inconveniences. I had to traverse lakes of a vast extent, and where storms are as frequent as on the ocean. It is true that

we had the advantage of landing every evening, but he was fortunate who could find some flat rock on which to pass the night. When it rained, our only way of protection against it was, by placing ourselves under the canoe turned bottom upwards.

The greatest dangers, however, are to be encountered on the rivers, particularly in places where they run with great rapidity. There the canoe flies like an arrow, and if it comes in contact with any of the rocks which are found there in great numbers, it is at once dashed into a thousand pieces. This misfortune happened to some of those who accompanied us in other canoes, and it was by a singular protection of Divine Goodness, that I escaped the same fate, for my canoe many times touched the rocks, but without receiving the least injury.

We risk too the endurance of all that is most distressing in hunger, for the length and difficulty of this kind of voyage does not permit us to carry anything but a sack of Indian corn. One would naturally suppose, that the chase might furnish us on the route with something we could live on, but if the game fails we find ourselves exposed to many days of fasting. Then, the only resource is to search for a kind of leaves which the Indians call *Kengnessanach*, and the French *Tripe de roche*. One would take them for *chervil*,* which they much resemble in shape, if they were not too large. They are prepared either by boiling or roasting, and those of which I have eaten are by no means unpalatable.

I was not obliged to suffer much from hunger until I reached the Lake of the Hurons; but this was by no means the case with the companions of my voyage, for the storms having scattered

[* The *tripe de, roche*, or rock-tripe, is one of the Lichens known in botanyas the *Umbilicaria Muhlenbergii*, and is much used for food by the Northern Indians. The *chervil* is the *Scandix cerefolium* of botanists, possessing a slightly aromatic taste, and much used in the South of Europe in soups and salads. *Francis' Life of Rale*, p. 175]

their canoes, they were not able to join me. I arrived therefore first at *Missilimakinak*, from whence I sent them some provisions, without which they would have starved to death. They had passed seven days without any other nourishment than what they could get from a crow which they had killed more by accident than skill, for they had not strength to hold themselves up.

The season was too far advanced to continue my route to the Illinois, from whence I was distant as yet about four hundred leagues. It was therefore necessary for me to remain at *Missilimakinak*, where there were two of our missionaries, one of whom was stationed among the Hurons, and the other among the *Outaouacks*. These last are very superstitious, and very much attached to the juggleries of their medicine-men. They claim an origin equally senseless and ridiculous, pretending that they are derived from three families, and that each family was composed of five hundred persons.

Some are from the family of *Michabou*, that is to say, of the Great Hare. They pretend that the Great Hare was a man of prodigious size; that he could spread nets in the water at eighteen fathoms deep, while the water scarcely came to his arm-pits; that one day during the deluge, he sent out the beaver to discover land, but this animal not having returned, he caused the otter to go out, who brought back a little earth covered with foam; that he repaired to the part of the lake where he found this land, which formed a little island; he walked in the water all around it, and this island became extraordinarily large. It is for this reason that they attribute to him the creation of land. They add, that after having accomplished this work, he flew up to Heaven, which is his ordinary residence, but after having left the earth, he ordered that when his descendants die, they shall burn their bodies, and then fling their ashes into the air, to the end that they may be able to raise themselves more easily towards Heaven; that if they should fail to do so, the snow would not cease

to cover the earth, their lakes and rivers would remain frozen, and not being able to catch fish, which is their ordinary food, they would all die in the spring.

It happened indeed a few years since, that the winter having continued much longer than usual, there was one general consternation among the Indians of the family of the Great Hare. They had recourse to their accustomed juggleries, and assembled many times to consult on the means of dissipating this hostile snow, which seemed obstinately determined to remain on the earth, when an old woman approached them. "My children," said she, "you have no wisdom. You know the orders which were left by the Great Hare, that we should burn dead bodies, and cast their ashes to the wind, that they might return more easily to Heaven their country; but you have neglected these orders, in leaving at some days journey from hence, a dead man without burning him, as if he did not belong to the family of the Great Hare. Repair your fault forthwith, and take measures to burn him, if you wish the snow to melt." "You are right, our mother," they answered; "you have more wisdom than we, and the counsel which you give restores us to life." They immediately deputed twenty-five men to go and burn that body. About a fortnight was spent in the journey, during which time the thaw came, and the snow melted. The old woman who had given this advice was overwhelmed with praises and presents, and this occurrence, which was so entirely natural, had a great influence in strengthening them in their folly and superstitious credulity.

The second family of the *Outaouaks* claims to be derived from *Namepich*, that is to say, the Carp. Their tradition is, that a carp having deposited its eggs on the borders of a river, and the sun having darted its rays upon them, they were formed into a woman, from whom they are descended: in this way they say they are of the family of the Carp.

The third family of the *Outaouaks* attributes its origin to the

paw of a *Machova*, that is to say, of a Bear, and they claim that they are of the family of the Bear, but without explaining in what manner they are derived. When they kill any of these animals, they make a feast for him with his own flesh—they speak to him and harangue him. "Do not have any ill will against us," they say to him, "because we have killed you. You have sense—you see that our children are suffering with hunger—they love you—they wish to make you enter into their bodies. And is it not a glorious thing for you to be eaten by the children of the Chief?"

The family of the Great Hare is the only one which burns the bodies of the dead; the other two families inter them. When any chief dies, they prepare a vast coffin, in which after having placed the body clothed in its most beautiful garments, they shut up with it his blanket, his gun, his supply of powder and lead, his bow and arrows, his kettle, his platter with some provisions, his tomahawk and pipe, his box of vermillion, his mirror, his collars of porcelain, and all the presents which were made him at his death according to their usual custom. They imagine that with this outfit he will make his journey to the other world more happily, and will meet with a more favorable reception from the great chiefs of the nation, who will conduct him to a place of enjoyment.

While all things are preparing in the coffin, the relatives of the deceased assist at the ceremony, mourning after their fashion, that is, chanting in a sorrowful tone, and beating time with a stick to which they have attached many little rattles.

The particular in which the superstition of these people appears the most extravagant, is in the worship which they bestow upon what they call their *Manitou*. As they are scarcely acquainted with anything but the animals in whose company they live in the forests, they imagine that in these animals, or rather in their skins, or in the plumage of the birds, resides a kind of

Spirit which governs all things, and which is master of life and death. There are, according to them, *Manitous* common to the whole nation, and also particular ones for each individual. *Oussakita*, they say, is the grand *Manitou* of all the animals which exist on the earth, and of the birds which fly in the air. It is he who governs them. When therefore they wish to go to the chase, they offer him tobacco, powder, lead, and skins well dressed, which they attach to the end of a pole and elevate in the air. "*Oussakita*," say they, "we give you something to smoke, and we offer you something wherewith to kill the game. Condescend to accept our presents, and do not permit them to escape our arrows. Permit us to kill them in great numbers, and very fat, so that our children may want neither clothing or nourishment."

They call *Michibichi* the *Manitou* of waters and fish, and offer him a sacrifice nearly similar when they wish to engage in fishing, or to undertake a voyage. It consists in casting into the water tobacco, provisions, kettles, and praying to him that the waters of the river may flow smoothly, that the rocks may not break their canoes, and that he will grant them an abundant supply of fish.

Besides these common *Manitous*, each one has his own particular one, which is a bear, or a beaver, or a bustard, or any animal of the kind. They carry the skin of this animal to war, or to the chase, and in their voyages, persuading themselves that it will preserve them from all danger, and ensure them success in their enterprises.

When an Indian wishes to select a *Manitou* for himself, the first animal which presents itself to his imagination during sleep, is usually that on which his choice falls. He therefore kills an animal of that kind, and places its skin, or its plumage if it be a bird, in an honorable place in his cabin. He then prepares a feast in its honor, during which he makes it a speech

in the most respectful terms, after which it is reoognized as his *Manitou.*

As soon as the Spring came, I departed from *Missilimakinak* to go to the residence of the Illinois. I found in my route many Indian nations, among whom were the *Maskoutings*, the *Jakis*, the *Omckoues*, the *Iripegouans*, the *Outagamis*, &c. Each of these nations has its own peculiar language, but in other respects they do not differ at all from the *Outaouacks.* A missionary who resides at the bay of the Puants, makes from time to time excursions among these Indians, to instruct them in the truths of religion.

After forty days' journey, I entered the river of the Illinois, and having followed its course for fifty leagues, I arrived at their first village, which contained three hundred cabins, all of four or five fires. One fire is always for two families. They have eleven villages in their nation. On the day after my arrival I was invited by the principal chief to a great feast, which he gave to the most considerable persons in the nation. To prepare for it he had caused them to kill a large number of dogs; an entertainment of this kind passes among the Indians for a most magnificent festival, and is therefore called the Feast of the Chiefs. The ceremonies observed are the same among all these nations. It is generally in feasts of this kind that the Indians deliberate on all their most important affairs, as for example, when the question in agitation is, whether they shall undertake a war against their neighbors, or whether they shall terminate it by propositions of peace.

When all the guests have arrived, they range themselves around the cabin, sitting either on the bare ground or on the mats, then the chief rises and begins his harangue. I confess to you that I have admired his flow of words, the justice and force of the reasons which he advanced, the eloquent turn which he gave them, the choice and delicacy of the expressions with which

he adorned his discourse. I believe that if I could commit to writing what this Indian said to us extemporaneously and without preparation, you would be convinced without difficulty, that the most able Europeans, after much meditation and study, could scarcely compose a discourse more solid and better turned.

The harangue finished, two Indians, who filled the office of carvers, distributed the plates to all the assembly, and each plate was appropriated to two guests. They eat, conversing together on indifferent subjects, and when the repast was finished they retired, carrying with them, according to their custom, what remained on their plates.

The Illinois never give those feasts which are customary among many other savage nations, where one is obliged to eat all that is served to him, even if he should die. When therefore any one finds himself unable to fulfil this ridiculous rule, he addresses some other guest whom he knows to have a better appetite: "My brother," he says to him, "have pity on me, I shall die if you do not save my life. Eat what remains to me, and I will make you a present of something." This is the only way of getting out of the dilemma.*

The Illinois only cover themselves about the waist, and leave the rest of the body entirely naked. Different compartments filled with all kinds of figures which they engrave on their bodies in a way which is ineffaceable, supply to them the place of garments. It is only in the visits which they make, or when they assist at church, that they wrap themselves in a covering, which during the summer is composed of a skin dressed, and during the winter of a skin with the hair on, the better to retain the heat. They ornament their heads with feathers of different colors, of which they make garlands and crowns, which they arrange with great

[*This custom is in force to this day among some of our Western Indians. See an amusing account of such a feast among the Pawnees, related by the Hon. C. A. Murray, in his "Travels in North America," v. i. pp. 238—242.]

taste. They take care always to paint their faces with various colors, but particularly with vermilion. They also use collars and pendants for the ears of small stones which they cut into the shape of precious stones; some of them are blue, others red, and others white as alabaster. To these it is always necessary to add a small piece of porcelain, which hangs at the end of the collar. The Illinois persuade themselves that these fantastic ornaments confer on them a degree of grace and attract respect.

When the Illinois are not engaged in war or the chase, their time is passed in sports, or feasting, or dancing. They have two kinds of dances: the one kind is used as a token of rejoicing, and they invite to it the women and young girls who are most distinguished. The other kind is to mark their grief at the death of the most considerable persons in their nation. It is by these dances that they pretend to honor the deceased, and to dry the tears of his relatives. All persons indeed have a right to this kind of mourning at the death of their relations, provided they make presents for this purpose. The dances last a greater or less time in proportion to the price and value of the presents, which are immediately afterwards distributed to the dancers. Their custom is not to bury the dead, but they wrap them in skins and attach them by the head and feet to the tops of trees.

When not engaged in games or feasts or dances, the men remain quiet on their mats, and pass their time either in sleeping, or in making bows, arrows, calumets, and other things of the same kind. As to the women, they toil like slaves from morning till night. It is their duty during the summer to cultivate the earth and plant the Indian corn; and from the commencement of winter they are occupied in manufacturing mats, dressing skins, and many other works of the kind, for their first care is to provide every thing that is necessary for their cabin.

Of all the nations of Canada, there are none who live in so

great abundance of everything as the Illinois. Their rivers are covered with swans, bustards, ducks, and teals. One can scarcely travel a league without finding a prodigious multitude of turkeys, who keep together in flocks, often to the number of two hundred. They are much larger than those we seen in France. I had the curiosity to weigh one, which I found to be thirty-six pounds. They have hanging from the neck a kind of tuft of hair, half a foot in length.

Bears and stags are found there in very great numbers, and buffaloes and roebucks are also seen in vast herds. Not a year passes but they kill more than a thousand roebucks and more than two thousand buffaloes. From four to five thousand of the latter can often be seen at one view, grazing on the prairies. They have a hump on the back and an exceedingly large head. The hair, except that on the head, is curled, and soft as wool. The flesh has naturally a salt taste, and is so light, that although eaten entirely raw, it does not cause the least indigestion. When they have killed a buffalo which appears to them too lean, they content themselves with taking the tongue, and going in search of one which is fatter.

Arrows are the principal arms which they use in war and in the chase. They are pointed at the end with a stone cut and sharpened in the shape of a serpent's tongue; and if no knife is at hand, they use them also to skin the animals they have killed. They are so skillful in using the bow, that they scarcely ever fail in their aim, and they do it with so much quickness that they can discharge a hundred arrows in the time another person would use in loading his gun.

They will not take the trouble to labor with the proper nets for fishing in the rivers, because the abundance of animals of all kinds which are found for their subsistence, renders them indifferent to fish. But when they take a fancy to have some, they embark in a canoe with their bows and arrows; standing upright,

for the purpose of more easily seeing the fish, as soon as they perceive it, they pierce it with an arrow.

The only method among the Illinois of acquiring public esteem and veneration, is, as is the case with all other savages, to gain the reputation of an able hunter, or much more of a good warrior. It is in this particular that they principally consider merit to consist, and one who possesses it they look upon as being truly a man. They are so passionately attached to this kind of glory, that they do not hesitate to undertake journeys of four hundred leagues through the depth of the forest, either to capture a slave or to take the scalp of an enemy they have killed. They count as nothing the fatigues and long fasts they have to endure, particularly when they approach the territory of their enemies; for then they do not dare to hunt, lest the animals, being only wounded, should escape with the arrow in their bodies, and thus warn the enemy to place himself in a state of defence. Their manner of making war, the same as among all savage nations, is to surprise their foes, and they therefore are accustomed to send on scouts, to observe their number and the direction of their march, or to examine if they are on their guard. According to the report which these bring back, they either place an ambush or make an irruption into their cabins, tomahawk in hand, and do not fail to kill some of them before they have it in their power to think of defence.

The tomahawk is made of the horn of a stag, or of wood in the shape of a cutlass, and terminated by a large ball. They hold the tomahawk in one hand and a knife in the other. As soon as they have dealt a blow on the head of an enemy, they immediately cut it round with the knife, and take off the scalp with extraordinary rapidity.

When a warrior returns to his own country loaded with many scalps, he is received with great honors; but he covers himself with glory when he has made prisoners and brought them with

him alive. As soon as he arrives, all the people of the village assemble and range themselves in line on the road which the prisoners have to pass. This reception is most cruel; some tear out the nails, others cut off the fingers or the ears, while others again deal blows with their clubs.

After this first reception, the old men assemble to deliberate whether they shall grant the prisoners their lives, or put them to death. When any dead person is to be revived, that is to say, if any one of their warriors has been killed, whom they conclude ought to be replaced in his cabin, they give to this cabin one of their prisoners, who is to take the place of the deceased; and this is what they call reviving the dead.

When the prisoner is condemned to death, they immediately plant a large post in the earth, to which they attach him by both hands. They make him sing his death-song, and all the savages having seated themselves about the stake, they kindle at some feet from it a large fire, in which they heat hatchets, and gun-barrels, and other instruments of iron. Then they come forward, one after the other, and apply these things red hot to the different parts of his body. Some scorch him with burning fire-brands; others gash his body with their knives; and others cut off a piece of his flesh which has been already roasted, and eat it in his presence. You will see one fill his wounds with powder, and rub it over his whole body, and afterwards apply the fire to it. In fine, each one torments him according to his caprice, and this during four or five hours, and sometimes even for two or three days. The more shrill and piercing the cries which the violence of the torments wrings from him, so much more diverting and agreeable to these barbarians does the spectacle become. It was the Iroquois who invented this frightful kind of death, and it is only by way of retaliation that the Illinois, in their turn, treat their Iroquois prisoners with the same cruelty.

What we understand by the word *Christianity*, is known among

all the savages by the name of *Prayer*. When, therefore, I shall tell you in the remainder of this letter that such an Indian tribe has embraced Prayer, it is the same as saying that it has become Christian, or that it is disposed to be so. There would have been less difficulty in converting the Illinois, if the Prayer had permitted polygamy among them. They acknowledged that the Prayer was good, and were delighted that we should teach it to their women and children; but when we spoke on the subject to themselves, we found how difficult it was to fix their natural inconstancy, and induce them to resolve that they would have but one wife, and retain her always.

When the hour arrives for morning and evening prayers, all repair to the Chapel. There are none among them, even including their great medicine-men, that is to say, the worst enemies of our religion, but send their children to be instructed and baptized. In this consists the best fruits which our mission at first receives among the Indians, and which is the most certain; for among the great number of infants whom we baptize, not a year passes but many die before they are able to use their reason. But, even among the adults, the greater part are so fervent, and so attached to the Prayer, that they will suffer the most cruel death sooner than abandon it.

It is a blessing to the Illinois that they are so far distant from Quebec, because it renders it impossible to transport to them the "fire-water," as it is carried to others. This drink is among the Indians the greatest obstacle to Christianity, and the source of an infinite number of their most shocking crimes. We know that they never purchase it but to plunge into the most furious intoxication, and the riots and sad deaths of which we were each day the witnesses, ought to outweigh the gain which can be made by the trade in a liquor so fatal.

It was for two years that I remained among the Illinois, at the end of which time I was recalled to devote the rest of my days

to the service of the *Abnakis*. It was the first mission to which I had been destined on my arrival in Canada, and it is that in which, apparently, I shall finish my life. It was necessary, therefore, for me to return to Quebec, for the purpose of going thither to rejoin my dear Indians. I have already described to you the length and difficulties of this journey, and shall therefore only mention a most consoling adventure which happened to me when about forty leagues distance from Quebec.

I found myself in a kind of village, where there were twenty-five French houses, and a Curé who had charge of the inhabitants. Near the village, might be seen an Indian cabin, in which lived a young female of about sixteen years of age, but who had for many years been afflicted with a malady which had at length reduced her to the last extremity. M. the Curé, who did not understand the language of these Indians, requested me to confess the sick person, and conducted me himself to the cabin. In the conversation which I had with this young girl on the truths of religion, I learned that she had been well instructed by one of our missionaries, but had never as yet received Baptism. After having passed two days in putting to her all the questions proper to assure myself on these points—"Do not refuse me," said she, "I conjure you, the grace of Baptism which I demand. You see how much oppression I have upon my breast, and that but little time remains for me to live. What a misfortune would it be to me, and how would you reproach yourself, if I should happen to die without receiving this grace!" I answered, that she should prepare to receive it on the next day, and left her. The joy which my reply gave her, caused so immediate a change, that she was in a state to repair early in the morning to the chapel. I was beyond measure surprised at her arrival, and immediately and most solemnly administered to her the rite of baptism. As soon as it was over she returned to her cabin, where she did not cease to thank the divine mercy for

so great a blessing, and to sigh for the happy moment which should unite her to God for all eternity. Her prayers were favorably heard, and I was privileged to assist at her death. What a providential dispensation for this poor girl, and what a consolation for me to have been the instrument which God was willing to use in placing her in heaven!

You will not require from me, my dear brother, that I should enter into detail with regard to all that has happened to me during the many years that I have been in this mission. My occupations are always the same; and I should expose myself to wearisome repetitions. I will therefore only relate to you certain facts which seem to me most worthy of your attention. I feel authorized to assert, in general, that you would find it difficult to restrain your tears if you should find yourself in my church when our Indians are assembled there, and be a witness of the piety with which they recite their prayers, chant divine offices, and participate in the Sacraments of Penance and the Eucharist. When they have been enlightened by the faith, and sincerely embraced it, they are no longer the same persons, and the greater part preserve undimmed the purity they have received at baptism. It is this which fills me with the deepest joy, when I hear their confessions, which are frequent; no matter what questions I put to them, I often can with difficulty find materials to render absolution necessary.

My duties among them are unceasing. As they look for assistance no where except from their missionary, and have entire confidence in him, it is not sufficient for me to confine myself to the spiritual functions of my ministry, for the sanctification of their souls. It is necessary, also, that I should interest myself in their temporal affairs, that I should be always ready to console them when they come to me for advice, that I should decide their little differences, that I should take care of them when they are ill, that I should bleed them, that I should administer

medicines to them, &c. My days are often so entirely occupied, that I am obliged to shut myself up to find time to attend to my prayers, and the recital of my Office.

The zeal with which God has filled me for the welfare of my Indians, was very much alarmed in the year 1697, when I learned that a tribe of the *Amalingan* Indians was coming to establish themselves within one day's journey of my village. I had reason to fear lest the arts of their medicine-men, that is, the sacrifices which they offer to the Evil Spirit, and the disorders which ordinarily attend them, might produce an impression on some of my young neophytes; but thanks to the Divine Mercy, my fears were presently dissipated in a way which I am going to relate to you.

One of our chiefs, celebrated in this country for his valor, having been killed by the English, who are not far distant from us, the *Amalingans* deputed several of their nation to proceed to our village, for the purpose of drying the tears of the relatives of the illustrious deceased; that is to say, as I have already explained to you, to visit them, to make them presents, and to testify by their dances the sympathy they felt in their affliction. They arrived in our village on Corpus Christi day.* I was then occupied in receiving the confessions of my Indians, which lasted the whole of that day, the night following, and the next day even till noon, when commenced the Procession of the Consecrated Host. This was conducted with much order and devotion, and although in the middle of these forests, with more of pomp and magnificence than you can well imagine. This spectacle, which was entirely new to the *Amalingans*, attracted their attention and excited their admiration. It seemed to me that I ought to avail myself of the favorable disposition which they showed, and therefore after hav-

[*An annual festival in the Church of Rome, on the Thursday after Trinity Sunday. Its design is to commemorate the corporal presence of Christ in the Holy Eucharist.]

ing assembled them, I made the following address in the Indian style.

"For a long time, my children, I have wished to see you: and now that I have this happiness, it wants but little that my heart should burst. Think of the joy which a father will experience who tenderly loves his children, when they return to him after a long absence, during which they have been exposed to the greatest dangers, and you can conceive a portion of what I feel. For although you do not as yet pray, I shall not cease to regard you as my children, and to have for you the tenderness of a father, because you are the children of the Great Spirit, who has given life to you as well as to those who pray, who has made the Heaven for you as well as for them, who cares for you as he does for them and for me, that all may together enjoy eternal happiness. What however gives me pain, and diminishes the joy I feel at seeing you, is the reflection which is forced upon me, that one day I must be separated from a part of my children, whose lot will be eternally miserable, because they will not pray, while the others who do pray will be in joy which shall never end. When I think of this sad separation, how can I have a contented heart? The joy which I receive from the happiness of some, does not equal my affliction on account of the misery which awaits others. If you had invincible obstacles to the Prayer, and if while you remain in the state in which you now are, I could enable you to enter Heaven, I would spare nothing to procure you this happiness. I would thrust you forward, I would force you to enter there, so much do I love you, and so much do I desire your welfare; but this is a thing which is impossible. It is necessary to pray, it is necessary to be baptized, to enable you to enter that place of enjoyments."

After this preamble, I explained to them at length the principal articles of our faith, and I continued thus:—

"All these sayings which I have endeavored to explain to you,

are not by any means human words; they are the words of the Great Spirit: neither are they at all written, as are the words of a man, on a collar, which they cause to express what they wish; but they are written in the Book of the Great Spirit, where a falsehood could not gain entrance."

To enable you to understand this Indian expression, I must remark, my dear brother, that the custom of these people, when they write to any nation is to send a collar, or a wide belt, on which they have made different figures with grains of porcelain of different colors. They give instructions to him who carries the collar, telling him, "This is what we mean the collar to say to such a nation, or to such a person," and so they send him forth. Our Indians would have difficulty in comprehending what was said, and would give it but little attention, if the speaker did not conform to their manner of thought and expression. I proceeded thus:—

"Courage, my children, listen to the voice of the Great Spirit, which speaks to you by my mouth. He loves you, and his love for you is so great that he has given his life to procure for you life eternal. Alas, perhaps he has only permitted the death of one of our chiefs, as a means of drawing you to the place of the Prayer, and causing you to hear his voice. Reflect then that you are not immortal. A day will come when others in this way will endeavor to dry the tears which are shed for your death, and what will it avail you to have been in this life numbered with great Chiefs, if after death you are cast into eternal flames? He whom you come to mourn with us, had the happiness a thousand times to have listened to the voice of the Great Spirit, and to have been faithful to the Prayer. Pray as he did, and you shall live eternally. Courage, my children, we will not separate at all, that some should go to one place and the rest to another; let us all go to Heaven, it is our country, it is thither you are exhorted to attain by the only Master of life, whose interpreter I am. Think of it seriously."

As soon as I had ceased speaking, they consulted together for some time, until at length their orator made me this answer on their part. "My father, I am delighted to hear you. Your voice has penetrated even to my heart, but my heart is as yet shut, nor am I able now to open it, to let you know what is there, or to which side it will turn. It is necessary that I should wait for many chiefs and other considerable tribes of our nation who will arrive during the next autumn. It is then that I will disclose my heart to you. Behold, my dear father, all that I am able to say to you at this time."

"My heart is content," I replied to them; "I am perfectly satisfied since my words have afforded you pleasure, and you ask time to think of them. You will only be firmer in your attachment to the Prayer when once you have embraced it. Nevertheless, I shall not cease to address myself to the Great Spirit, and to beg him to regard you with the eyes of mercy, and to strengthen your thoughts to the end that they may decide in favor of the Prayer." After this I left the assembly, and they returned to their own village.

When the autumn came, I learned that one of our Indians was about to go to the *Amalingans*, to obtain corn for planting the fields. I sent for him, and charged him to tell them on my part, that I was impatient again to see my children, that I was always present with them in spirit, and I prayed them to remember the promise they had given me. The Indian faithfully fulfilled his commission, and this was the answer which the *Amalingans* made.

"We are very much obliged to our father for thinking of us without ceasing. For our part, we have meditated much on what he has said to us. We cannot forget those words while we have a heart, for they have been so deeply engraven there that nothing can efface them. We are persuaded that he loves us, we wish to listen to him, and to obey him in that point which he so much

desires us. We accept the prayer which he purposes to us, for we see nothing in it but what is good and praiseworthy. We are entirely resolved to embrace it, and should at once go to find our father in his village, if he had there sufficient food for our sustenance during the time which he should devote to our instruction. But how can we find it there? We know that hunger is in the cabin of our father, and it is this which doubly afflicts us, that our father suffers hunger, and that we cannot go to see him that he may instruct us. If our father could come and pass some time here with us, he would live and might instruct us. This is what you must say to our father."

This answer of the *Amalingans* was returned to me at a most favorable time. The greater part of my Indians were going to be away for some days to procure food to last them until the harvest of Indian corn. Their absence, therefore, gave me leisure to visit the *Amalingans*, and on the next day I embarked in a canoe to repair to their village. I was about a league distant, when they perceived me, and immediately saluted me with a continual discharge of their guns, which lasted until I landed from the canoe. This honor which they had paid me, assured me of their present dispositions. I did not lose the least time, but as soon as I had arrived, I caused them to plant the Cross, and those who accompanied me raised as soon as possible a Chapel, which they made of bark, in the same way in which they form their cabins, and within it they erected an altar. While they were occupied in this work, I visited all the cabins of the *Amalingans*, to prepare them for the instructions I was about to give. As soon as I commenced, they gave the most assiduous attention. I assembled them three times during the day in the Chapel, namely, in the morning after mass, at noon, and in the evening after prayer. During the rest of the day I went round the cabins, where I again gave them more particular instructions.

When after some days of continual toil, I judged that they

were sufficiently instructed, I fixed the day on which they should come to receive regeneration in the waters of Holy Baptism. The first who came to the Chapel were the chief, the orator, three of the most considerable men of the nation, with two females. Immediately after their baptism, two other bands, each of twenty Indians, succeeded them, who received the same grace. In fine, all the rest continued to arrive there on that day and during the next.

You can well believe, my dear brother, that severe as may be these labors for a missionary, he is at the same time well recompensed for all his fatigues, by the delightful consolation that he has been the means of bringing an entire nation into the path of safety. I had prepared to leave them and return to my own village, when a deputation came to me on their part, with the message, that they had all assembled in one place, and prayed me to repair to their meeting. As soon as I appeared in their midst, the orator addressed these words to me in the name of all the rest: "Our father," said he, "we can find no words in which to testify the inexpressible joy we have felt at having received baptism. It seems to us now that we have a different heart. Everything which caused us any difficulty is entirely dissipated, our thoughts are no longer wavering, the baptism has strengthened us within, and we are firmly resolved to respect it all the days of our life. Behold what we wish to say to you before you leave us." I replied to them in a short discourse, in which I exhorted them to persevere in the grace they had received, and to do nothing unworthy of the rank of children of God, with which they had been honored when they received Holy Baptism. As they were preparing to depart to the sea-shore, I added, that on their return we would determine which was best, whether we should go and live with them, or they should come to form with us one single village.

The village in which I live is called *Nanrantsouack*, and is sit-

uated in a country between Acadia and New England. This mission is about twenty-four leagues distance from *Pentagouet*, and they reckon it to be a hundred leagues from *Pentagouet* to Port Royal. The river which flows through my mission is the largest of all those which water the territories of the Indians. It should be marked on the maps by the name of *Kinibeki*, and it is this which has induced the French to give those Indians the name of *Kanibals*. This river empties into the sea at *Sankderank*, which is only five or six leagues from *Pemquit*. After having ascended forty leagues from *Sankderank*, you arrive at my village, which is on the height of a point of land. We are, at the most, distant only two days' journey from the English settlements, while it takes us more than a fortnight to reach Quebec, and the journey is very painful and difficult. It would therefore be natural that our Indians should trade with the English, and every possible inducement has been held out to them to attract and gain their friendship; but all these efforts were useless, and nothing was able to detach them from their alliance with the French. And yet the only tie which unites us so closely is their firm attachment to the Catholic faith. They are convinced that if they give themselves up to the English, they will shortly find themselves without a missionary, without a sacrifice, without a sacrament, and even without any exercise of religion, so that little by little, they would be plunged again into their former heathenism. This firmness of our Indians has been subjected to many kinds of tests by their powerful neighbors, but without their being ever able to gain anything.

At the time that the war was about to be rekindled between the European powers, the English governor, who had lately arrived at Boston, requested a conference with our Indians by the sea-shore, on an island which he designated.* They consented,

[*This was Governor Dudley in 1703. They met at Casco. The account of this interview given by Rale, differs so much from that of the

and begged me to accompany them thither, that they might consult me with regard to any artful propositions which might be made to them, so that they could be assured their answers would contain nothing contrary to their religion or the interest of the King's service. I therefore followed them, with the intention of merely remaining in their quarters, to aid their counsels, without appearing before the Governor. As we approached the island, being more than two hundred canoes in number, the English saluted us with the discharge of all the cannon of their ships, and the Indians responded to it by a similar discharge from all their guns. Immediately afterwards the Governor appeared on the island, the Indians hastily landed, and I thus found myself where I did not desire to be, and where the Governor did not wish that I should be. As soon as he perceived me, he advanced some steps to where I was, and after the usual compliments returned to the midst of his people, while I rejoined the Indians.

"It is by the order of our Queen," said he, "that I have come to see you: she earnestly desires that you should live in peace. If any of the English should be so imprudent as to wrong you, do not think to avenge yourselves, but immediately address your complaints to me, and I will render you prompt justice. If war should happen to take place between us and the French, remain neutral, and do not in any way mix yourselves in our difficulties. The French are as strong as we are: permit us therefore to settle our own quarrels. We will supply your wants, we will take your furs, and we will afford you our merchandise at a moderate price." My presence prevented him from saying all that he had intended, for it was not without design that he had brought a minister with him.

When he had ceased speaking, the Indians retired to deliberate among themselves on the answer they should make. During

New England historians that it is impossible in any way to reconcile them. See, for example, Penhallow's Indian wars, N. H. Hist. Coll. vol. i. p. 20.]

this time the Governor took me aside. "I pray you, Monsieur," said he, "do not induce the Indians to make war on us." I replied to him "that my religion, and my character as a priest, engaged me to give them only the counsels of peace." I should have spoken more, had I not found myself immediately surrounded by a band of some twenty young warriors, who feared lest the Governor wished to take me away. Meantime the Indians advanced, and one of them made the Governor the following reply:—

"Great Chief, you have told us not to unite with the Frenchman in case that you declare war against him. Know that the Frenchman is my brother; we have one and the same Prayer both for him and ourselves, and we dwell in the same cabin at two fires, he is at one fire and I am at the other fire. If I should see you enter the cabin on the side of the fire where my brother the Frenchman is seated, I should watch you from my mat where I am seated at the other fire. If, observing you, I perceived that you had a hatchet, I should think, what does the Englishman intend to do with that hatchet? Then I should raise myself from my mat to see what he was going to do. If he lifted the hatchet to strike my brother the Frenchman, I should seize mine and rush at the Englishman to strike him. Would it be possible for me to see my brother struck in my cabin, and I remain quiet on my mat? No, no, I love my brother too well not to defend him. Thus I would say to you, Great Chief, do nothing to my brother, and I will not do anything to you. Remain quiet on your mat, and I will remain quietly on mine."

Thus the conference ended. A short time afterwards some of our Indians arrived from Quebec, and reported that a French ship had brought the news of war being renewed between France and England. Immediately our Indians, after having deliberated according to their custom, ordered their young people to kill the dogs to make a war feast, and to learn there who wished to engage themselves. The feast took place, they arranged the kettle, they

danced, and two hundred and fifty warriors were present. After the festival they appointed a day to come to confession. I exhorted them to preserve the same attachment to their Prayer that they would have in the village, to observe strictly the laws of war, not to be guilty of any cruelty, never to kill any one except in the heat of combat, to treat humanely those who surrendered themselves prisoners, &c.

The manner in which these people make war, renders a handful of their warriors more formidable, than would be a body of two or three thousand European soldiers. As soon as they have entered the enemy's country, they divide themselves into different parties, one of thirty warriors, another of forty, &c. They say to each other, "To you, we give this hamlet to devour," (that is their expression), "To those others we give this village, &c." Then they arrange the signal for a simultaneous attack, and at the same time on different points. In this way our two hundred and fifty warriors spread themselves over more than twenty leagues of country, filled with villages, hamlets, and mansions; on the day designated they made their attack together early in the morning, and in that single day swept away all that the English possessed there, killed more than two hundred, and took five hundred prisoners, with the loss on their part of only a few warriors slightly wounded. They returned from this expedition to the village, having each one two canoes loaded with the plunder they had taken.

During the time that the war lasted, they carried desolation into all the territories which belonged to the English, ravaged their villages, their forts, their farms, took an immense number of their cattle, and made more than six hundred prisoners. At length these gentlemen, pursuaded with reason that in keeping my Indians in their attachment to the Catholic faith, I was more and more strengthening the bonds which united them to the French, set in operation every kind of wile and artifice to detach

them from me. Neither offers nor promises were spared to induce the Indians to deliver me into their hands, or at least to send me back to Quebec, and take one of their ministers in my place. They made many attempts to surprise me and carry me off by force; they even went so far as to promise a thousand pounds sterling to any one who would bring them my head. You may well believe, my dear brother, that these threats are able neither to intimidate me, nor diminish my zeal. I should be only too happy if I might become their victim, or if God should judge me worthy to be loaded with irons, and to shed my blood for the salvation of my dear Indians.

At the first news which arrived of peace having been made in Europe, the Governor of Boston sent word to our Indians, that if they would assemble in a place which he designated, he would confer with them on the present conjuncture of affairs.* All the Indians accordingly repaired to the place appointed, and the Governor addressed them thus:—"Men of *Naranhous*, I would inform you that peace is made between the King of France and our Queen, and by this treaty of peace the King of France has ceded to our Queen, Plaisance and Portrail, with all the adjacent territories. Thus, if you wish, we can live in peace together. We have done so in former times, but the suggestions of the French have made you break it, and it was to please them that you came to kill us. Let us forget all these unfortunate affairs, and cast them into the sea, so that they shall not appear any more, and we may be good friends."

"It is well", replied the Orator in the name of the Indians "that the Kings should be in peace; I am contented that it should be so, and have no longer any difficulty in making

[* This was after the war was brought to a close by the Treaty of Utrecht in 1713. Gov. Dudley at that time again met the Indians at Portsmouth on the 11th of July, 1713. Here again the accounts given by Rale and Penhallow are widely different.]

peace with you. I was not the one who struck you during the last twelve years; it was the Frenchmen who used my arm to strike you. We were at peace, it is true. I had even thrown away my hatchet I know not where, and as I was reposing on my mat, thinking of nothing, the young men brought a message which the Governor of Canada had sent, and by which he said to me, 'My son, the Englishman has struck me; help me to avenge myself; take the hatchet, and strike the Englishman.' I, who have always listened to the words of the French Governor, search for my hatchet, I find it entirely rusted, I burnish it up, I place it at my belt to go and strike. Now, the Frenchman tells me to lay it down; I therefore throw it far from me, that no one may longer see the blood with which it is reddened. Thus, let us live in peace; I consent to it.

"But you say that the Frenchman has given you Plaisance and Portrail, which is in my neighborhood, with all the adjacent territories. He may give you anything he pleases, but for me, I have my land which the Great Spirit has given me to live on: as long as there shall be child remaining of my nation, he will fight to preserve it."

Every thing ended in this friendly way: the Governor made a great feast for the Indians, after which each one withdrew.

The happy arrival of peace, and the tranquillity they began to enjoy, suggested to the Indians the idea of rebuilding our Church, ruined during a sudden irruption which the English made, while they were absent from the village.* As we were very far removed from Quebec, and were much nearer Boston, they sent a deputation thither of several of the principal men of the nation to ask for workmen, with the promise of paying them liberally for their labor. The Governor received them with great demonstrations of friendship, and gave them all kinds of caresses. "I wish myself to rebuild your Church", said he, "and I will

[* This is known in New England history as the expedition of Colonel Hilton in 1705.]

spend more for you, than has been done by the French Governor, whom you call your father. It would be his duty to rebuild it, since it was in some degree for his sake that it was ruined, by inducing you to strike me; for, as for me, I defend myself as I am able; he on the contrary, after having used you for his defence, has abandoned you. I will do much more for you, for not only will I grant you the workmen, but I wish also to pay them myself, and to defray all the other expences of the edifice which you desire to have erected. But as it is not reasonable that I who am English should build a Church, without placing there also an English Minister to guard it, and to teach the Prayer, I will give you one with whom you will be contented, and you shall send back to Quebec the French Minister who is now in your village."

"Your words astonish me," replied the deputy of the Indians, "and you excite my wonder by the proposition which you make to me. When you first came hither, you saw me a long time before the French governors; but neither those who preceded you, nor your ministers have spoken to me of prayer, or of the Great Spirit. They have seen my furs, my skins of the beaver and the elk, and it is about these only they have thought; these they have sought with the greatest eagerness, so that I was not able to furnish them enough, and when I carried them a large quantity I was their great friend, but no further. On the contrary, my canoe having one day missed the route, I lost my way, and wandered a long time at random, until at last I landed near Quebec, in a great village of the Algonquins, where the black Robes* were teaching. Scarcely had I arrived when one of the black Robes came to see me. I was loaded with furs, but the French black Robe scarcely deigned to look at them. He spoke to me at once of the Great Spirit, of Paradise, of Hell, of the Prayer, which is the only way to reach Heaven. I heard

* The Jesuits.

him with pleasure, and so much delighted in his conversations, that I remained a long time in that village to listen to them. In fine, the Prayer pleased me, and I asked him to instruct me; I demanded Baptism, and I received it. At last I returned to my country, and related what had happened to me. They envied my happiness, they wished to participate in it, they departed to find the black Robe and demand of him Baptism. It is thus that the French have acted towards me. If as soon as you had seen me, you had spoken to me of the Prayer, I should have had the unhappiness to pray as you do, for I was not capable of discovering whether your Prayer was good. Thus, I tell you that I hold to the Prayer of the French; I agree to it, and I shall be faithful to it even until the earth is burnt and destroyed. Keep then your workmen, your gold, and your minister, I will not speak to you more of them: I will ask the French Governor my father, to send them to me."

Indeed, Monsieur the Governor had no sooner been apprised of the ruin of our Church, than he sent some workmen to rebuild it. It possesses a beauty which would cause it to be admired even in Europe, and nothing has been spared to adorn it. You have been able to see by the detail I have given in my letter to my Nephew, that in the depths of these forests, and among these Indian tribes, the Divine service is performed with much propriety and dignity. It is to this point that I am very attentive, not only when the Indians reside in the village, but also all the time that they are obliged to remain by the sea-shore, where they go twice each year, for the purpose of obtaining means of subsistence. Our Indians have so entirely destroyed the game in this part of the country that during ten years they have scarcely found either elk or roebuck. The bears and beavers have also become very rare. They have scarcely anything on which to live but Indian corn, beans, and pumpkins. They grind the corn between two stones to reduce it to meal, then they make it into

a kind of hominy, which they often season with fat or with dried fish. When the corn fails them, they search in the ploughed land for potatoes, or acorns, which last they esteem as much as corn. After having dried them, they are boiled in a kettle with ashes to take away their bitterness. For myself I eat them dry, and they answer for bread.

At a particular season of the year, they repair to a river not far distant, where during one month the fish ascend in such great quantities, that a person could fill fifty thousand barrels in a day, if he could endure the labor. They are a kind of large herrings, very agreeable to the taste when they are fresh; crowding one upon another to the depth of a foot, they are drawn out as if they were water. The Indians dry them for eight or ten days, and live on them during all the time that they are planting their fields.

It is only in the Spring that they plant their corn, and they do not give them their last tillage until towards Corpus-Christi Day. After this they deliberate as to what spot on the sea-shore they shall go to find something to live on until the harvest, which does not ordinarily take place until a little after the Festival of the Assumption.* When their deliberations are over, they send a messenger to pray me to repair to their assembly. As soon as I have arrived there, one of them addresses me thus in the name of all the others. "Our father, what I say to you is what all those whom you see here would say; you know us, you know that we are in want of food, we have had difficulty in giving the last tillage to our fields, and now have no other resource until the harvest, but to go and seek provisions by the sea-shore. It will be hard for us to abandon our Prayer, and it is for this reason we hope you will be willing to accompany us, so that while seeking the means of living, we shall not at all interrupt our Prayer. Such and such persons will embark you, and what you have to

[* The 15th of August.]

carry with you shall be distributed in the other canoes. This is what I have to say to you." I have no sooner replied to them *kekikberba*, (it is an Indian term which implies, I hear you, my children, I agree to what you ask,) than they all cry out together *ariarie*, which is an expression of thanks. Immediately afterwards we leave the village.

As soon as they reach the place where they are to pass the night, they fix up stakes at intervals in the form of a chapel; they surround them with a large tent made of ticking, which has no opening except in front. It is all finished in a quarter of an hour. I always carry with me a beautiful board of cedar about four feet in length, with the necessary supports, and this serves for an altar, while above it they place an appropriate canopy. I ornament the interior of the Chapel with very beautiful silk cloths; a mat of reeds dyed and admirably made, a large bear skin serves for a carpet. They carry this always prepared, and no sooner are they settled down than the Chapel is arranged. At night I take my repose on a carpet; the Indians sleep in the air in the open fields if it does not rain, but if the snow or the rain falls, they cover themselves with bark which they carry with them, and which they have rolled out until it resembles cloth. If their journey is made in the winter, they remove the snow from a space large enough for the Chapel to occupy, and arrange it as usual. There each day is made the morning and evening prayers, and the Sacrifice of the Mass is offered up.

When the Indians have reached their destination, the very next day they occupy themselves in raising the Church, which they dress up with their bark cloths. I carry with me my plate, and every thing which is necessary to ornament the choir, which I hang with silk cloths and beautiful calicos. Divine Service is performed there as at the village, and in fact they form a kind of village with all their wigwams made of bark, which are all prepared in less than an hour. After the Festival of the Assump-

tion, they leave the sea and return to their village for the purpose of reaping their harvest. During this time they are obliged to live very sparingly until All-Saints' Day,* when they return a second time to the sea. It is while there, during this season, that they fare daintily. Besides the large fish, the shell-fish, and the fruits, they find also bustards, ducks, and all kinds of game, with which the sea is covered at the place where they encamp, which is divided up by a great number of little islands. The hunters who go out in the morning to shoot ducks and other kinds of game, sometimes kill twenty of them at a single discharge of their guns. Towards the Festival of the Purification,† or later towards Ash-Wednesday, they return to the village, except the hunters, who disperse about in pursuit of the bears, elks, deer, and beavers.

These good Indians have often given proofs of their sincere attachment for me, particularly on two occasions, when being with them at the sea-shore, they became exceedingly alarmed on my account. One day while they were busy in the chase, a report was suddenly spread, that a party of the English had made an irruption into my quarters and carried me off. In that very hour they assembled, and the result of their deliberation was, that they would pursue the party until they had overtaken it, and would snatch me from their hands, even at the cost of life. The same instant they sent two young Indians to my cabin, the night being then far advanced. When they entered my cabin, I was engaged in composing the life of a saint in the Indian language. "Ah, our father!" they cried out, "how relieved we are to see you!" "And I am equally rejoiced to see you," I replied; "but what has brought you here at so unusual a time?" "Our coming is indeed useless," said they; "but we were assured that the English had carried you off. We came to mark their tracks, and our warriors could scarcely be restrained from pursuing them, and

[* The 1st of November.] [† The 2nd of February.]

attacking the fort, where, if the news had been true, the English would, without doubt, have imprisoned you." "You see, my children," I answered, "that your fears are unfounded; but the affectionate care which my children have shown, fills my heart with joy, for it is a proof of their attachment to the Prayer. To-morrow you shall depart immediately after Mass, to undeceive as soon as possible our brave warriors, and to relieve them from their anxiety."

Another alarm, equally false, placed me in great embarrassment, and exposed me to the danger of perishing by famine and misery. Two Indians came in haste to my abode, to give me notice that they had seen the English within a half day's journey. "Our father," said they to me, "there is not the least time to lose. You will risk too much by remaining here. We will wait for them, and perhaps will keep in advance of them. The runners are going to set out this moment to watch them. But as for you, it is necessary that you should go to the village with the persons whom we have brought to conduct you thither. When we know that you are in a place of safety, we shall be easy."

I therefore departed at break of day with ten Indians, who acted as my guides; but after some days' march, we found ourselves at the end of our small stock of provisions. My conductors killed a dog which followed them, and eat it; finally they were obliged to resort to their bags made of the skin of the sea-wolf, which they also eat. I found it however impossible for me to bring myself to taste them. Nevertheless I lived on a kind of wood, which they boiled, and which, after being thus prepared, is as tender as radishes after they have been partially cooked. They use all the wood except the heart, which is very hard, and which they throw aside. It had not a bad taste, but I had great difficulty in swallowing it. Sometimes too they found attached to the trees excrescences of wood which are white, like large mushrooms: these they boil and reduce to a kind of jelly;

but it is necessary to acquire a taste for them. At other times they dried in the fire the bark of the evergreen oak, then they pounded it up and made a kind of paste, or else used it dry. Then there were the leaves which grew in the clefts of the rocks, and which they call *tripes de roche;* when these are boiled they make a paste very black and disagreeable. But of all these I eat, for there is nothing which famine will not enable us to digest.

With food of this kind we could make very short journeys in a day. We arrived at last at a lake which had begun to thaw, and where there was already four inches depth of water on the ice. It was necessary to cross it with our snow-shoes, but as these were made of strips of skin, as soon as they were wet they became very heavy, and rendered our march exceedingly difficult. One of our people went before to sound the way, yet I suddenly found myself sinking into my knees. Another who was at my side presently sunk to his waist, crying out, "My father, I am perishing!" As I approached to give him my hand, I found myself sinking still deeper. At last, it was not without great difficulty that we extricated ourselves from this danger, through the incumbrance caused by our snow-shoes, of which we could not rid ourselves. Nevertheless the risk I ran of drowning was much less than that of dying of cold in the midst of this half-frozen lake.

But the next day new dangers awaited us in the passage of a river which it was necessary for us to cross on the floating ice. We, however, extricated ourselves happily from it, and at length arrived at the village. My first step was to dig up a little Indian corn which I had left in my abode, and I eat it, entirely raw as it was, to appease my first hunger, while the poor Indians were making all kinds of efforts to regale me. And in truth the repast which they prepared for me, frugal as it was, and little as it might have seemed tempting to you, was in their eyes a veritable feast. At first they served me with a plate of boiled Indian

corn. For the second course, they gave me a small piece of bear's meat, with acorns, and a thin cake of Indian corn cooked under the ashes. At last, the third course, which formed the dessert, consisted of an ear of Indian corn roasted before the fire, with some grains of the same corn cooked under the ashes. When I asked them why they had provided for me such excellent fare, "How now! our father," they replied to me, "is it not two days since you have eaten anything? could we do less? would to God that we were able often to regale you in this way!"

Whilst I was thinking to recover from my fatigues, one of the Indians who were dwelling by the sea-shore, being ignorant of my return to the village, caused a new alarm. Having come to my quarters, and neither finding me anywhere, nor those who were in the same cabin with me, he did not at all doubt but that we had been taken off by a party of the English, and while on his way to give intelligence to those who were in his quarter, he reached the banks of a river. There, he took a piece of bark, on which he drew with charcoal a representation of the English surrounding me, and one of them cutting off my head. (This is the only kind of writing which the Indians possess, and by these kinds of figures they convey to each other information, in the same way that we should do by our letters.) He then placed this kind of letter around a stick which he planted on the bank of the river, for the purpose of informing those who passed as to what had happened to me. A short time afterwards, some Indians who were passing by that spot in six canoes to go to the village, perceived this bark. "See that writing," said they, "let us learn what it tells us. Alas!" they all cried on reading it, "the English have killed those of the quarter in which our father lives; as for him, they have cut off his head." They immediately plucked off the lock of hair which they are accustomed to leave negligently flowing on their shoulders, and sat down about the stick on which they had found the letter, even to the

next day, without speaking a word. This ceremony is among them the sign of the deepest affliction. The next day they continued their route until they arrived within half a league of the village, where they halted. From thence they sent one of their number through the woods to the village, to see whether the English had come to burn the fort and the cabins. I happened to be walking up and down along the river by the fort, for the purpose of reciting my Breviary, when the Indian arrived opposite to me on the other side, "Ah, my father," he cried out, "how relieved I am to see you! My heart was dead, but it revives at seeing you. We found a writing which told us that the English had cut off your head. How relieved I am that it was false." When I proposed to him that I should send over a canoe to enable him to cross the river, "No," he replied, "it is enough that I have seen you. I retrace my steps to carry this agreeable news to those who have accompanied me, and we will shortly join you." And in truth they arrived there that very day.

I think, my very dear brother, that I have satisfied the desire you expressed to me, by the summary account I have given you of the nature of the country, the character of the Indians, my occupations, my toils, and the dangers to which I am exposed. You judge, without doubt, that it is from the English in our neighborhood that I have most to fear. It is true that for a long time past they have sought my destruction, but neither the ill-will they bear me, nor the death with which they threaten me,* can ever separate me from my ancient flock. I commend them to your holy prayers, and am, with the most tender attachment, &c.

* He was murdered during the following year.

DEATH OF FATHER RASLES.

1724.

LETTER III.

FROM FATHER DE LA CHASSE, SUPERIOR GENERAL OF MISSIONS IN NEW FRANCE, TO FATHER * * * OF THE SAME SOCIETY.

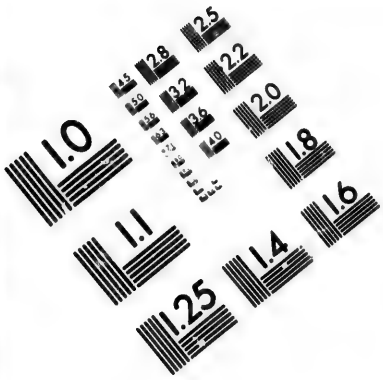
At Quebec, the 29th of Octobe

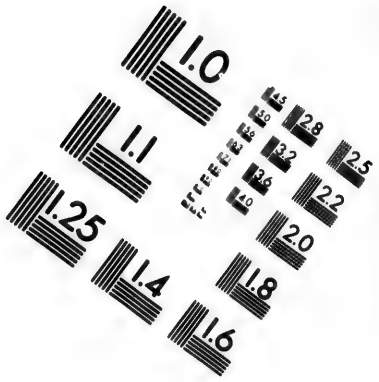
MY REVEREND FATHER,

The Peace of our Lord be with you :

In the deep grief which we feel for the loss of one of our oldest Missionaries, it is a sweet consolation for us, that he has fallen a victim to his love, and his zeal to preserve the faith in the hearts of his neophytes. You have been already apprized by previous letters of the origin of the war which was kindled up between the English and the Indians. In the former it was the desire to extend their dominions; in the latter, the horror of all subjection and the attachment to their religion, caused at first that misunderstanding, which was at length followed by an open rupture.

The Father Rasles, missionary to the *Abnakis*, had become exceedingly odious to the English. Convinced that his industry in strengthening the Indians in their faith constituted the greatest obstacle to the design they had formed of encroaching upon their lands, they set a price upon his head; and, on more than one occasion, endeavored either to capture or destroy him. At last they have effected their object in satisfying their transports of hate, and freeing themselves from this apostolical man; but, at the same time, they have procured for him a glorious death, which was always the height of his desires; for we know that for





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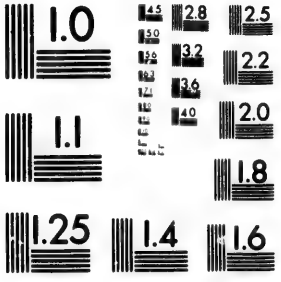

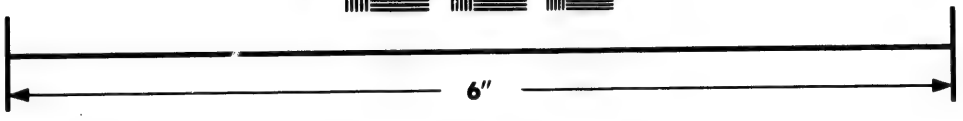

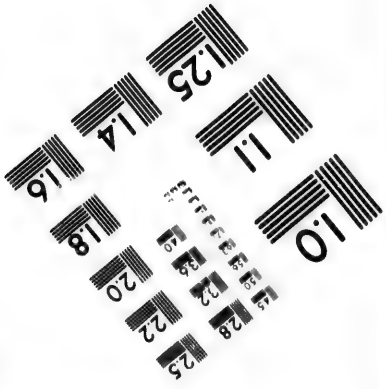

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a long time he had aspired to the happiness of sacrificing his life for his flock. I will describe to you in a few words the circumstances of this event.

After frequent hostilities had taken place on one side and the other between the two nations, a small force, composed of the English and their Indian allies to the number of about eleven hundred men, came unexpectedly to attack the village of *Nanrantsouak*. The thick brushwood by which the village is surrounded, aided them in concealing their march, and as besides it was not even enclosed by palisades, the Indians taken by surprise, did not perceive the approach of their enemies, until they received a general discharge of musketry which riddled all the cabins. There were at that time but about fifty warriors in the village. At the first noise of the muskets they tumultuously seized their arms, and went forth from their cabins to make head against the enemy. Their design was, not rashly to sustain a contest with so great a number of combatants, but to cover the flight of the women and children, and to give them time to gain the other side of the river, which was not as yet occupied by the English.

Father Rasles, warned by the clamors and the tumult, of the peril which threatened his neophytes, promptly went forth from his house, and without fear presented himself before the enemy. His hope was, either to suspend, by his presence, their first efforts, or, at least, to draw on him alone their attention, and thus, at the expense of his own life, to procure the safety of his flock.

The instant they perceived the missionary they raised a general shout, followed by a discharge of musket balls which rained on him. He fell dead at the foot of a large cross which he had erected in the middle of the village, to mark the public profession they had made to adore in that place the crucified God.

Seven Indians who surrounded him, and who exposed their lives to preserve that of their Father, were killed at his side.*

The death of the shepherd spread consternation through the flock. The Indians took to flight, and crossed the river, part by the ford and part by swimming. They had to endure all the fury of their enemies, even to the moment when they took refuge in the woods on the other side of the river. There they found themselves assembled to the number of about a hundred and fifty. Although more than two thousand musket shots had been directed against them, they had but about thirty persons killed, including women and children, and fourteen wounded. The English did not attempt to pursue the fugitives, but contented themselves with pillaging and burning the village. The fire which they kindled in the church was preceded by an unhallowed profanation of the sacred vessels and of the adorable body of Jesus Christ.

The precipitate retreat of the enemy permitted the Nanrantsouakans to return to the village. On the morrow, they visited the ruins of their cabins, while the women on their part sought for herbs and plants to dress the wounded. Their first care was to weep over the body of their missionary; they found it pierced with a thousand wounds, his scalp taken off, the skull split by blows of a hatchet, the mouth and eyes filled with mud, the bones of the legs broken, and all the limbs mutilated. They were scarcely able to attribute except to the Indian allies of the En-

[* Hutchinson's account (*Hist.* v. ii., p. 311), which is gathered from those present in the action, differs widely from that of Pere de la Chasse. He states that the force sent on this expedition only amounted to two hundred and eight men. His narrative of Rale's death is, that he shut himself up in a wigwam, from which he fired upon the English. Moulton, the commander, had given orders not to kill the priest. But a wound inflicted upon one of the English by Rale's fire, so exasperated Jacques, a lieutenant, that he burst the door, and shot Rale through the head.]

glish, such an excess of inhumanity on a body deprived of feeling and of life.

After these fervent Christians had washed and kissed many times the precious remains of their Father, they buried him in the same spot where the evening before he had celebrated the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, that is, on the place where the altar had stood before the burning of the Church.*

It is by so precious a death that this apostolical man finished, on the 23rd of August of this year, a career of thirty-seven years passed in the painful toils of this mission. He was in the 67th year of his age. His fasts and continual fatigues had latterly enfeebled his constitution. During the last nineteen years he had dragged himself about with difficulty, in consequence of a

[* In one of the former letters we gave a quotation from Whittier's beautiful poem, describing the scene which might have been witnessed in that little Indian village, during the ministry of Rale. In the following lines he has pictured the ruin as it was presented to some Indian wanderers shortly after the battle. From that bloody day the Norridgwock tribe was blotted out from the list of the Indian nations.

"No wigwam smoke is curling there;
The very earth is scorched and bare;
And they pause and listen to catch a sound
Of breathing life, but there comes not one,
Save the fox's bark and the rabbit's bound;
And here and there, on the blackening ground,
White bones are glistening in the sun.
And where the house of prayer arose,
And the holy hymn at daylight's close,
And the aged priest stood up to bless
The children of the wilderness,
There is naught, save ashes sodden and dank,
And the birchen boats of the Norridgwock,
Tethered to tree, and stump, and rock,
Rotting along the river bank!"]

fall in which he broke his right thigh and his left leg. It happened that the fractured parts having badly united, it became necessary to break the left leg anew. While they were drawing it most violently, he sustained this painful operation with extraordinary firmness and admirable tranquillity. Our physician who was present appeared so astonished, that he could not forbear saying to him: "Ah, my Father, permit at least some groans to escape you, for you have cause for them."

Father Rasles joined to talents which made him an excellent missionary, those virtues which are necessary for the Evangelical Ministry, to be exercised with effect among our Indians. He enjoyed robust health, and with the exception of the accident I have mentioned, I do not know that he ever had the least indisposition. We were surprised at his industry and readiness in acquiring the different Indian languages. There was not one on this continent of which he had not some smattering. Besides the Abnakis language, which he spoke for a long time, he knew also the Huron, the Otaouais, and the Illinois. He availed himself of them with great effect in the different missions where they are used. Since his arrival in Canada, he was never seen to act inconsistently with his character; he was always firm and courageous, severe to himself, tender and compassionate in his regard to others.

It is but three years since, that by order of Monsieur our Governor, I made a journey through Acadia. In conversation with Father Rasles, I represented to him that in case they declared war against the Indians, he would run the risk of his life; that his village being but fifteen leagues distant from the English forts, he would find himself exposed to the first irruptions; that his preservation was necessary to his flock, and that he ought to take measures for his own security. "My measures are taken," he answered in a firm tone; "God has committed this flock to my care, and I will share its lot, being too happy

if permitted to sacrifice myself for it." He repeated often the same thing to his neophytes, to strengthen their constancy in the faith. "We have had but too good a proof," they themselves have said to me, "that our dear Father spoke to us from the abundance of his heart; we have seen him with a tranquil and serene air meet death, and oppose himself alone to the fury of the enemy, to retard their first efforts, for the purpose of giving us time to escape the danger, and to preserve our lives."

As a price had been set upon his head, and they had attempted at different times to capture him, the Indians proposed to him during the last spring, that they should conduct him farther into the country on the side towards Quebec, where he would be protected from the perils by which his life was menaced. "What opinion then have you of me," he answered, with an air of indignation; "do you take me for a cowardly deserter? Ah! what would become of your faith, if I should desert you? Your salvation is dearer to me than my life."

He was indefatigable in the exercises of his zeal. Without cessation being occupied in exhorting the Indians to virtue, he thought of nothing but making them earnest Christians. His manner of preaching, vehement and pathetic, made a vivid impression on their hearts. Some families of the Loups,* arrived lately from Orange,† have told me with tears in their eyes, that they were indebted to him for their conversion to Christianity. Having received Baptism from him about thirty years ago, the instructions which he at that time gave them, had never been effaced from their minds, so efficacious had been his words, and so deep their traces in the hearts of those who heard them.

He was not contented with instructing the Indians almost every day in the church, but often visited them in their cabins. His familiar conversations charmed them, since he knew how to temper them with a holy cheerfulness, which pleased the Indians

* Indian nations. [† *Fort Orange*—Albany.]

much more than a grave and sombre air. Thus he had the art to persuade them whatever he wished, and he was among them as a master in the midst of his scholars.

Notwithstanding the continual occupations of his ministry, he never omitted the Holy Exercises which are observed in our religious houses. He rose and offered his prayers at the hour which is there appointed. He never excused himself from the eight days of retreat from the world in each year, and had set apart for this purpose the first days of Lent, which is the time that the Saviour entered into the desert. "Unless we fix a particular time in the year for these holy exercises," he one day said to me, "one occupation succeeds another, and after many delays we run the risk of not finding time to observe them?"

Religious poverty was exemplified in all his person, in his furniture, in his food, and in his dress. In a spirit of mortification, he interdicted himself the use of wine, even when he found himself among the French. His ordinary nourishment was a preparation of meal of Indian corn. During certain winters, when the Indians were often in want of everything, he found himself reduced to live on acorns; but far from complaining, he never seemed better contented. During the last three years of his life, while the war prevented the Indians from freely entering into the chase, or planting their fields, their necessities became extreme, and the Missionary often found himself in dreadful want. It became necessary to send to him from Quebec the provisions required for his subsistence. "I am ashamed," he wrote to me, "of the care which you take of me: a Missionary born to suffer should not be so well treated."

He did not suffer any one to lend a hand to assist him in the most ordinary cares, but always attended to himself. He cultivated his own garden, prepared his own firewood, attended to his cabin and his hominy, repaired his old clothes, endeavoring in the spirit of poverty to make them last as long as possible.

The cassock which he had on at the time he was killed, seemed so worn and in so miserable a state to those who stripped him of it, that they did not think it worth carrying off, as they had at first intended. They threw it back on his body, and it was sent to us at Quebec.

To the same extent that he treated himself severely was he compassionate and charitable to others. He retained nothing for himself, but everything that he received he immediately distributed to his poor neophytes. Thus the greater part have given at his death demonstrations of grief more vivid than if they had lost their nearest relations.

He took extraordinary pains to ornament and embellish his church, being persuaded that this external show which produced an effect on the senses, animated the devotion of uncivilized people, and inspired them with the most profound veneration for our holy mysteries. As he knew a little of painting, and also understood the art of turning, it was decorated with many works which he had himself executed.

You will well judge, my Reverend Father, that these virtues of which New France was the witness during so many years, had gained for him the respect and affection both of the French and Indians.

Thus he was universally regretted. No one can doubt but that he was put to death out of hatred to his ministry, and his zeal in establishing the true faith in the hearts of the Indians. This is the opinion which is entertained by M. de Bellemont, Superior of the Seminary of Saint Sulpice, at Montreal. Having asked from him the accustomed suffrages for the deceased, for the sake of the intercourse of prayers which we have among us, he replied to me, by using those well known words of St. Augustine, that it was doing an injury to a martyr to pray for him. "Injuriam facit martyri qui orat pro eo."

May it please the Lord, that his blood shed for so just a cause,

may enrich these heathen lands, so often watered by the blood of the Evangelical laborers who have preceded us; that it may render them fertile in earnest Christians, and that it may animate the zeal of apostolical men to come and reap the abundant harvest which is offered by so many people still shrouded in the shadow of death.

Nevertheless, as it appertains only to the church to declare the names of the saints, I recommend him to your holy sacrifices, and to those of all the Fathers. And I pray you not to forget him who is with much respect, &c.

[We cannot conclude this letter without quoting from Dr. Convers Francis' Life of Rale—to which we have been indebted for many of these notes—a couple of passages, describing the present appearance of the spot on which this tragedy took place. "Whoever has visited the pleasant town of Norridgwock, as it now is, must have heard of *Indian Old Point*, as the people call the place where Rale's village stood, and perhaps curiosity may have carried him thither. If so, he has found a lovely, sequestered spot in the depth of nature's stillness, on a point around which the waters of the Kennebec, not far from their confluence with those of Sandy River, sweep on in their beautiful course, as if to the music of the rapids above; a spot over which the sad memory of the past, without its passions, will throw a charm, and on which, he will believe, the ceaseless worship of nature might blend itself with the aspirations of Christian devotion. He will find, that vestiges of the old settlement are not wanting now; that broken utensils, glass beads, and hatchets, have been turned up by the husbandman's plough, and are preserved by the people in the neighborhood; and he will turn away from the place with the feeling, that the hatefulness of the mad spirit of war is aggravated by such a connection with nature's sweet retirements."—p. 321.

"The spot on which the Norridgwock missionary fell, was marked, some time after his death, by the erection of a cross. This, it is said, in process of time, was cut down by a company of hunters. I believe it was replaced by some rude memorial in stone. But in 1833 a permanent monument was erected in honor of Rale. . . . . An acre of land was purchased, including the site of Rale's church and his grave. Over the grave, on the 23d of

August, 1833, the anniversary (according to the New Style) of the fight at Norridgwock, and just one hundred and nine years after its occurrence, the foundation was laid, and the monument raised, with much ceremony, amidst a large concourse of people. Bishop Fenwick, of Boston, directed the ceremonies, and delivered an address full of appropriate interest. Delegates from the Penobscot, Passamaquoddy, and Canada Indians, were present on the occasion. The monument is about twenty feet high, including an iron cross, with which it is surmounted. On the south side of the base, fronting the Kennebec River, is an appropriate and somewhat long Latin inscription."—p. 329.]

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CATHERINE, THE IROQUOIS SAINT.

1656—1715.

LETTER IV.

FROM FATHER CHOLONEC, MISSIONARY OF THE SOCIETY OF JESUS, TO FATHER AUGUSTIN LE BLANC OF THE SAME SOCIETY, PROCURATOR OF MISSIONS IN CANADA.

At Sault de St. Louis, the 27th of August, 1715.

MY REVEREND FATHER,

The Peace of our Lord be with you:

THE marvels which God is working every day through the intercession of a young Iroquois female who has lived and died among us in the order of sanctity, have induced me to inform you of the particulars of her life, although you have not pressed me in your letters to enter into detail. You have yourself been a witness of these marvels, when you discharged there with so much zeal the duties of a Missionary, and you know that the high Prelate who governs this church, touched by the prodigies with which God has deigned to honor the memory of this holy maiden, has with reason called her the Geneviéve of New France. All the French who are in the colonies, as well as the Indians, hold her in singular veneration. They come from a great distance to pray at her tomb, and many, by her intercession, have been immediately cured of their maladies, and have received from Heaven other extraordinary favors. I will write you nothing, my Reverend Father, which I have not myself seen during the time she was under my care, or which I have not learned of the Missionary who conferred on her the rite of holy Baptism.

Tegahkouita, (which is the name of this sainted female about

whom I am going to inform you,) was born in the year 1656, at Gandaouaguè, one of the settlements of the lower Iroquois, who are called *Agniez*. Her father was an Iroquois and a heathen; her mother, who was a Christian, was an Algonquin, and had been baptized at the village of Trois Rivieres, where she was brought up among the French. During the time that we were at war with the Iroquois, she was taken prisoner by these Indians, and remained a captive in their country. We have since learned, that thus in the very bosom of heathenism, she preserved her faith even to her death. By her marriage she had two children, one son and one daughter, the latter of whom is the subject of this narrative, but she had the pain to die without having been able to procure for them the grace of Baptism. The small-pox, which ravaged the Iroquois country, in a few days removed her husband, her son, and herself. Tegahkouita was also attacked like the others, but she did not sink as they did under the violence of the disease. Thus, at the age of four years she found herself an orphan, under the care of her aunts, and in the power of an uncle who was the leading man in the settlement.

The small-pox had injured her eyes, and this infirmity having rendered her incapable of enduring the glare of light, she remained during whole days shut up in her wigwam. By degrees she began to love this seclusion, and at length that became her taste which she had at first endured only from necessity. This inclination for retirement, so contrary to the usual spirit of the young Iroquois, was the principal cause of her preserving her innocence of life while living in such scenes of corruption.

When she was a little older, she occupied herself at home in rendering to her aunts all those services of which she was capable, and which were in accordance with her sex. She ground the corn, went in search of water, and carried the wood; for such, among these Indians, are the ordinary employments of females. The rest of her time she spent in the manufacture of little arti-

cles, for which she possessed an extraordinary skill. By this means she avoided two rocks which would have been equally fatal to her innocence—idleness, so common there among her own sex, and which is the source of an infinite number of vices; and the extreme passion they have to spend their time in gossiping visits, and to show themselves in public places where they can display their finery. For it is not necessary to believe that this kind of vanity is confined to civilized nations; the females of our Indians, and especially the young girls, have a great taste for parading their ornaments, some of which they esteem very precious. Their finery consists of cloths which they buy of the Europeans, mantles of fur, and different kinds of shells, with which they cover themselves from head to foot. They have also bracelets, and collars, and pendants for the ears and belts. They adorn even their moccasons, for these personal ornaments constitute all their riches, and it is in this way, by the different kinds of garments, that they mark their rank among themselves.

The young Tegahkouita had naturally a distaste for all this finery which was appropriate to her sex, but she could not oppose the persons who stood to her in the place of father and mother, and to please them she had sometimes recourse to these vain ornaments. But after she became a Christian, she looked back upon it as a great sin, and expiated this compliance of which she had been guilty, by a severe penance and almost continual tears.

M. de Thracy, having been sent by the government to bring to reason the Iroquois nations who laid waste our colonies, carried the war into their country and burned three villages of the Agniez. This expedition spread terror among the Indians, and they acceded to the terms of peace which were offered them. Their deputies were well received by the French, and a peace concluded to the advantage of both nations.

We availed ourselves of this occasion, which seemed a favora-

ble one, to send missionaries to the Iroquois. They had already gained some smattering of the Gospel, which had been preached to them by Father Iogues, and particularly those of Onnontagué, among whom this Father had fixed his residence. It is well known that this Missionary received there that recompense of martyrdom which well befitted his zeal. The Indians at first held him in a severe captivity and mutilated his fingers, and it was only by a kind of miracle that he was able for a time to escape their fury. It seemed however that his blood was destined to be the seed of Christianity in that heathen land, for having had the courage, in the following year, to return for the purpose of continuing his mission among these people who had treated him so inhumanly, he finished his apostolic career amid the torments they forced him to endure.* The works of his two companions were crowned by the same kind of death, and it is without doubt to the blood of these first Apostles of the Iroquois nation, that we must ascribe the blessings which God poured out

[* The History of Father Isaac Iogues is full of romantic interest. He was the first to carry the cross into Michigan and among the villages of the Mohawks. On his return from the falls of St. Mary escorted by some Huron braves, they were taken by a war party of the Mohawks. His companions were all put to death with the usual attendants of savage cruelty, but not before Iogues had baptized two of them, who were neophytes, with some drops of water he found clinging to the broad blade of an ear of Indian corn they had thrown to him. After suffering every cruelty and being obliged to run the gauntlet through three villages, he was in 1642 ransomed by the Dutch at Albany and set at liberty. He then sailed for France to obtain permission from the Pope to celebrate the divine mysteries with his mutilated hands. The Pope granted his prayer, saying, "Indignum esset Christi martyrum Christi non libere sanguinem." On his return to the Mohawks for the second time, he was at once received as a prisoner and condemned to death as an enchanter. He approached the cabin where the death festival was kept, and as he entered, received the death blow. His head was hung upon the palisades of the village, and his body thrown into the Mohawk river. *Bancroft*, iii. 138.]

on the zeal of those who succeeded him in this evangelical ministry.

The Father Fremin, the Father Bruyas, and the Father Pierron, who knew the language of the country, were chosen to accompany the Iroquois deputies, and on the part of the French to confirm the peace which had been granted them. They committed also to the Missionaries the presents which the Governor made, that it might facilitate their entrance into these barbarous regions. They happened to arrive there at a time when these people are accustomed to plunge into all kinds of debauchery, and found no one therefore in a fit state to receive them. This unseasonable period however procured for the young Tegahkouita the advantage of knowing early those of whom God wished to make use, to conduct her to the highest degree of perfection. She was charged with the task of lodging the Missionaries, and attending to their wants. The modesty and sweetness with which she acquitted herself of this duty, touched her new guests, while she on her part was struck with their affable manners, their regularity in prayer, and the other exercises into which they divided the day. God even then disposed her to the grace of Baptism, which she would have requested, if the missionaries had remained longer in her village.

The third day after their arrival they were sent for to *Tionnontoquen*, where their reception was to take place: it was very pompous. Two of the missionaries established themselves in this village, while the third commenced a mission in the village of *Onneiout*, which is more than thirty leagues distant in the country. The next year they formed a third mission at *Annontaguê*. The fourth was established at *Tsonnontouan*, and the fifth at the village of *Goiogoen*. The natives of the *Agniez* and the *Tsonnontouans* are very numerous, and separated in many different villages, which is the reason why they were obliged to increase the number of the missionaries.

At length Tegahkouita became of a marriageable age, and her relations were anxious to find a husband for her, because, according to the custom of the country, the game which the husband kills in the chase, is appropriated to the benefit of his wife and the other members of her family. But the young Iroquois had inclinations very much opposed to the designs of her relations. She had a great love of purity, even before she knew the excellence of this virtue, and anything which could soil it ever so little, impressed her with horror. When therefore they proposed to establish her in life, she excused herself under different pretexts, alleging above all her extreme youth, and the little inclination she had to enter into marriage.

The relatives seemed to approve of these reasons; but a little while after they resolved to betroth her, when she least expected it, and without even allowing her a choice in the person to whom she was to be united. They therefore cast their eyes upon a young man whose alliance appeared desirable, and made the proposition both to him and to the members of his family. The matter being settled on both sides, the young man in the evening entered the wigwam which was destined for him, and seated himself near her. It is thus that marriages are made among the Indians; and although these heathen extend their dissoluteness and licentiousness to the greatest excess, there is yet no nation which in public guards so scrupulously that outward decorum which is the attendant of perfect modesty. A young man would be forever dishonored, if he should stop to converse publicly with a young female. Whenever marriage is in agitation, the business is to be settled by the parents, and the parties most interested are not even permitted to meet. It is sufficient that they are talking of the marriage of a young Indian with a young female, to induce them with care to shun seeing and speaking with each other. When the parents on both sides have agreed, the young man comes by night to the wigwam of his future spouse,

and seats himself near her; which is the same as declaring, that he takes her for his wife, and she takes him for her husband.

Tegahkouita appeared utterly disconcerted when she saw the young man seated by her side. She at first blushed, and then rising abruptly, went forth indignantly from the wigwam; nor would she re-enter until the young man left it. This firmness rendered her relatives outrageous. They considered that they had in this way received an insult, and resolved that they would not be disappointed. They therefore attempted other stratagems, which served only to show more clearly the firmness of their niece.

Artifice not having proved successful, they had recourse to violence. They now treated her as a slave, obliging her to do everything which was most painful and repulsive, and malignantly interpreting all her actions, even when most innocent. They reproached her without ceasing for the want of attachment to her relations, her uncouth manners, and her stupidity, for it was thus that they termed the dislike she felt to marriage. They attributed it to a secret hatred of the Iroquois nation, because she was herself of the Algonquin race. In short, they omitted no means of shaking her constancy.

The young girl suffered all this ill treatment with unwearied patience, and without ever losing anything of her equanimity of mind or her natural sweetness; she rendered them all the services they required with an attention and docility beyond her years and strength. By degrees, her relatives were softened, restored to her their kind feelings, and did not further molest her in regard to the course she had adopted.

At this very time Father Jacques de Lamberville was conducted by Providence to the village of our young Iroquois, and received orders from his superiors to remain there, although it seemed most natural that he should go on to join his brother, who had charge of the mission to the Iroquois of *Onnontagué*.

Tegahkouita did not fail to be present at the instructions and prayers which took place every day in the chapel, but she did not dare to disclose the design she had for a long time formed of becoming a Christian; perhaps, because she was restrained by fear of her uncle, in whose power she entirely was, and who, from interested motives, had joined in the opposition to the Christians; perhaps, because modesty itself rendered her too timid, and prevented her from discovering her sentiments to the missionary.

But, at length, the occasion of her declaring her desire for baptism presented itself, when she least expected it. A wound which she had received in the foot detained her in the village, whilst the greater part of the women were in the fields gathering the harvest of Indian corn. The Missionary had selected this time to go his rounds, and instruct at his leisure those who were remaining in the wigwams. He entered that of Tegahkouita. This good girl on seeing him was not able to restrain her joy. She at once began to open her heart to him, even in presence of her companions, on the earnest desire she had to be admitted into the fold of the Christians. She disclosed also the obstacles she had been obliged to surmount on the part of her family, and in this first conversation showed a courage above her sex. The goodness of her temper, the vivacity of her spirit, her simplicity and candor, caused the Missionary to believe that one day she would make great progress in virtue. He therefore applied himself particularly to instruct her in the truths of Christianity, but did not think he ought to yield so soon to her entreaties: for the grace of Baptism should not be accorded to adults, and particularly in this country, but with great care and after a long probation. All the winter therefore was employed in her instruction and a rigid investigation of her manner of life.

It is surprising, that notwithstanding the propensity these Indians have for slander, and particularly those of her own sex, the Missionary did not find any one but gave a high encomium

to the young catechumen. Even those who had persecuted her most severely were not backward in giving their testimony to her virtue. He therefore did not hesitate any longer to administer to her the holy Baptism which she asked with so much godly earnestness. She received it on Easter Day in the year 1676, and was named Catherine, and it is thus that I shall call her in the rest of this letter.

The only care of the young neophyte was now to fulfill the engagements she had contracted. She did not wish to restrict herself to the observance of common practices, for she felt that she was called to a more perfect life. Besides the public instructions, at which she was present punctually, she requested also particular ones for the regulation of her private and secret life. Her prayers, her devotions, and her penances were arranged with the utmost exactness, and she was so docile to form herself according to the plan of perfection which had been marked out for her, that in a little time she became a model of virtue.

In this manner several months passed away very peaceably. Even her relations did not seem to disapprove of the new course of life which she was leading. But the Holy Spirit has warned us by the mouth of Wisdom, that the faithful soul which begins to unite itself to God, should prepare for temptation; and this was verified in the case of Catherine. Her extraordinary virtue drew upon her the persecutions even of those who admired her. They looked upon a life so pure, as being a tacit reproach to their own irregularities, and with the design of discrediting it, they endeavored by divers artifices to throw a taint upon its purity. But the confidence which the neophyte had in God, the distrust she felt of herself, her constancy in prayer, and that delicacy of conscience which made her dread even the shadow of a sin, gave her a perfect victory over the enemies of her innocence.

The exactness with which she observed the festival days at the

Chapel, was the cause of another storm which came upon her on the part of her relations. The chaplet recited by two choirs is an exercise of these holy days; this kind of psalmody awakens the attention of the neophytes and animates their devotions. They execute the hymns and sacred canticles which our Indians chant, with much exactness and harmony, for they have a fine ear, a good voice, and a rare taste for music. Catherine never omitted this exercise. But they took it ill in the wigwam that on these days she abstained from going to work with the others in the field. At length, they came to bitter words, cast upon her the reproach, that Christianity had made her effeminate and accustomed her to an indolent life; they did not even allow her anything to eat, to oblige her, by means of famine, to follow her relations and to aid in their labor. The neophyte bore with constancy their reproach and contempt, and preferred in those days to do without nourishment, rather than violate the law which required the observance of these festivals, or to omit these ordinary practices of piety.

This firmness, which nothing could shake, irritated more and more her heathen relatives. Whenever she went to the Chapel they caused her to be followed with showers of stones by drunken people, or those who feigned to be so, so that, to avoid their insults, she was often obliged to take the most circuitous paths. This extended even to the children, who pointed their fingers at her, cried after her, and in derision called her "the Christian." One day, when she had retired to her wigwam, a young man entered abruptly, his eyes sparkling with rage, and a hatchet in his hand, which he raised as if to strike her. Perhaps he had no other design than to frighten her. But whatever might have been the Indian's intentions, Catherine contented herself with modestly bowing her head, without showing the least emotion. This intrepidity, so little expected, astonished the Indian to such

a degree, that he immediately took to flight, as if he had been himself terrified by some invisible power.

It was in such trials of her patience and piety that Catherine spent the summer and autumn which followed her baptism. The winter brought her a little more tranquillity, but nevertheless, she was not freed from suffering some crosses on the part of one of her aunts. This woman, who was of a deceitful and dangerous spirit, could not endure the regular life of her niece, and therefore constantly condemned her, even in actions and words the most indifferent. It is a custom among these Indians, that uncles give the name of daughters to their nieces, and the nieces reciprocally call their uncles by the name of father. Hence it happens, that cousin-germans are commonly called brothers. It happened, however, once or twice, that Catherine called the husband of her aunt by his proper name, and not by that of father: but it was entirely owing to mistake or want of thought. Yet this evil spirit did not need any thing farther as the foundation on which to build up a most atrocious calumny. She pretended to believe, that this manner of expressing herself, which seemed to her so familiar, was an evidence of criminal intimacy, and immediately went to seek the missionary, to decry her to him, and destroy in his mind those sentiments of esteem which he had always entertained for the neophyte. "Well!" she said, at once, "so Catherine whom you esteem so virtuous, is notwithstanding a hypocrite who deceives you. Even in my presence she solicited my husband to sin." The missionary, who understood the evil spirit of this woman, wished to know on what she founded an accusation of this kind, and having learned what had given occasion to this odious suspicion, he administered to her a severe reprimand, and sent her away utterly confounded. When he afterwards mentioned it to the neophyte, she answered him with a candor and confidence which showed the absence of all falsehood. It was on this occasion that she declared, what perhaps we should

not have known if she had not been placed on this trial, that by the kindness of the Lord she could not remember that she had ever stained the purity of her person, and that she did not fear receiving any reproach on this point in the day of judgment.

It was sad for Catherine to have to sustain so many conflicts, and to see her innocence exposed without cessation to the outrages and railleries of her countrywomen. And in other respects she had everything to fear in a country where so few of the people had imbibed a taste for the maxims of the Gospel. She, therefore, earnestly desired to be transplanted to some other mission where she might serve God in peace and liberty. This was the subject of her most fervent prayers, and it was also the advice of the missionary, but it was not easy to bring about. She was entirely in the power of an uncle, watchful of all her actions, and through the aversion he had for Christians, incapable of appreciating her resolution. But God who listens favorably even to the simple desires of those who place their trust in Him, disposed all things for the repose and consolation of the neophyte.

A colony of Iroquois had lately been formed among the French, the peace which existed between the two nations having given these Indians an opportunity of coming to hunt on our lands. Many of them stopped near the prairie of the Madeleine, where the missionaries of our society who dwelt there met them, and at different times conversed with them on the necessity of salvation. God at the same time influencing their hearts by the impressions of his grace, these Indians found themselves suddenly changed, and listened without objection to the proposition that they should renounce their country and settle among us. They received baptism after the usual instructions and probation.

The example and devotion of these new converts drew to them many of their countrymen, and in a few years the Mission of *St. Francis Xavier du Sault,* (for it was thus that it was named,) became celebrated for the great number of its neophytes and their

extraordinary fervor. If an Iroquois had made these a visit, ever so short, even though he had no other design but to see his relatives or friends, he seemed to lose entirely the desire to return to his own country. The charity of these neophytes led them even to divide with the new comers, the fields which they had cleared with much labor: but the way in which this feeling appeared to the greatest advantage was, in the eagerness they showed in instructing them in the truths of our faith. To this work they devoted entire days and even a portion of the night. Their conversations, full of unction and piety, made the most lively impression on the hearts of their guests, and transformed them, so to speak, into different beings. He who a little while before breathed of nothing but blood and war, became, softened, humble, teachable, and ready to obey the most difficult maxims of our religion.

This zeal did not restrict itself to those who came to visit them, but induced them also to make excursions into the different settlements of their nation, and they always returned accompanied by a large number of their countrymen. On the very day that Catherine received Baptism, one of the most powerful of the *Agniez* returned to the mission in company with thirty of the Iroquois of that tribe whom he had gained to Jesus Christ. The neophyte would very willingly have followed him, but she depended, as I have said before, on an uncle who did not see without sorrow the depopulation of his village, and who openly declared himself the enemy of those who thought of going to live among the French.

It was not until the following year that she obtained the facilities she wished for the execution of her design. She had an adopted sister who had retired with her husband to the Mission du Sault. The zeal of the recent converts to draw their relatives and friends to the new colony, inspired her with the same thoughts with regard to Catherine, and disclosing her designs to her hus-

band, he gave his consent. He joined himself therefore to an Indian of Loretto and some other neophytes, who under cover of going to trade in beaver-skins with the English, travelled to the villages of the Iroquois, with the intention of engaging their acquaintances to follow them, and to share in the blessings of their conversion.

With difficulty he reached the village in which Catherine lived, and informed her secretly of the object of his journey, and the desire his wife felt that she should be with her at the Mission du Sault, whose praise he set forth in a few words. As the neophyte appeared transported with joy at this disclosure, he warned her to hold herself in readiness to depart immediately on his return from his journey to the English, which he would not have made except to avoid giving umbrage to his uncle. This uncle was then absent, without having any suspicion of his niece's design. Catherine went immediately to take leave of the missionary, and to ask his recommendation to the Fathers who were over the Mission du Sault. The missionary on his part, while he could not withhold his approval of the resolution of the neophyte, exhorted her to place her trust in God, and gave her those counsels which he judged necessary in the present juncture.

As the journey of her brother-in-law was only a pretext the better to conceal his design, he almost immediately returned to the village, and the day after his arrival, departed with Catherine and the Indian of Loretto who had kept him company. It was not long before it was discovered in the village that the neophyte had disappeared, and they had no doubt but that she had followed the two Indians. They immediately therefore despatched a runner to her uncle to give him the news. The old chief, jealous of the increase of his nation, foamed with rage at the intelligence, and immediately charging his gun with three balls, he went in pursuit of those who had accompanied his niece. He made such haste that in a very short time he came up with them.

The two Indians, who had known beforehand that he would not fail to pursue them, had concealed the neophyte in a thick wood, and had stopped as if to take a little repose. The old man was very much astonished at not finding his niece with them, and after a moment's conversation, coming to the conclusion that he had credited too easily the first rumor which had been spread, he retraced his footsteps to the village. Catherine regarded this sudden retreat of her uncle as one effect of the protection of God which she enjoyed, and continuing her route she arrived at the Mission du Sault, in the end of autumn of the year 1677.

She took up her abode with the family of her brother-in-law. The cabin belonged to one of the most fervent Christians in the place, named Anastasia, whose care it was to instruct those of her own sex who aspired to the grace of baptism. The zeal with which she discharged her duty in this employment, her conversations, and her example, charmed Catherine. But what edified her exceedingly was the piety of all the converts who composed this numerous mission. Above all, she was struck with seeing men become so different from what they were when they lived in their own country. She compared their exemplary life with the licentious course they had been accustomed to lead, and recognizing the hand of God in so extraordinary a change, she ceaselessly thanked Him for having conducted her into this land of blessings.

To make a suitable return for these favors from Heaven, she felt that she ought to give herself up entirely to God, without having any reserve, or permitting any thought of herself. The consecrated place became, thenceforth, all her delight. She repaired thither at four o'clock in the morning, attended the Mass at the dawn of day, and afterwards assisted at that of the Indians, which was said at sunrise. During the course of the day she from time to time broke off from her work to go and hold communion with Jesus Christ at the foot of the altar. In the

evening she returned again to the church, and did not leave it until the night was far advanced. When engaged in her prayers, she seemed entirely unconscious of what was passing without, and in a short time the Holy Spirit raised her to so sublime a devotion, that she often spent many hours in intimate communion with God.

To this inclination for prayer, she joined an almost unceasing application to labor. She sustained herself in her toils by the pious conversations which she held with Anastasia, that fervent Christian of whom I have already spoken, and with whom she had formed a most intimate friendship. The topics on which they most generally talked were, the delight they received in the service of God, the means of pleasing him and advancing in virtue, the peculiar traits seen in the lives of the saints, the horror they should have of sin, and the care with which they should expiate by penitence those they had the misfortune to commit. She always ended the week by an exact investigation of her faults and imperfections, that she might efface them by the sacrament of penance, which she underwent every Saturday evening. For this she prepared herself by different mortifications with which she afflicted her body, and when she accused herself of faults even the most light, it was with such vivid feelings of compunction, that she shed tears and her words were choked by sighs and sobbings. The lofty idea she had of the majesty of God made her regard the least offence with horror, and when any had escaped her, she seemed not able to pardon herself for its commission.

Virtues so marked did not permit me for a very long time to refuse her the permission which she so earnestly desired, that on the approaching festival of Christmas she should receive her first communion. This is a privilege which is not accorded to those who come to reside among the Iroquois, until after some years of probation and many trials; but the piety of Catherine placed her

beyond the ordinary rules. She participated, for the first time in her life, in the holy Eucharist, with a degree of fervor proportioned to the reverence she had for this grace, and the earnestness with which she had desired to obtain it. And on every subsequent occasion on which she approached the holy sacrament, it was always with the same disposition. Her manner alone inspired the most lukewarm with devotion, and when a general communion was about to take place, the most virtuous neophytes endeavored with emulation to be near her, because, said they, the sight alone of Catherine served them for an excellent preparation for communing worthily.

After the festival of Christmas, it being the proper season for the chase, she was not able to excuse herself from following her sister and brother-in-law into the forests. She then made it apparent, that one is able to serve God in all places where his providence calls him. She did not relax any of her ordinary exercises, while her piety even suggested to her holy practices to substitute in place of those which were incompatible with a residence in the forests. There was a time set apart for every thing. In the morning she applied herself to her prayers, and concluded with those which the Indians make in common according to their custom, and in the evening she renewed them again, continuing until the night was far advanced. While the Indians were partaking of their repast to prepare themselves to endure the chase through the whole day, she retired to some secret place to offer up her devotions; as this was a little before the time when they were accustomed to hear Mass at the Mission. She had fixed a cross in the trunk of a tree which she found by the side of a stream, and this solitary spot was her oratory. There, she placed herself in spirit at the foot of the altar, she united her soul with that of the priest, she prayed her guardian angel to be present for her at that holy sacrifice, and to apply to her its benefits. The rest of the day she spent in laboring with the others of her

sex, but to banish all frivolous discourse and preserve her union with God, she always introduced some religious conversation, or perhaps invited them to sing hymns or anthems in praise of their Lord. Her repasts were very simple, and often she did not eat till the end of the day. At other times, she secretly mixed ashes with the food provided for her, to deprive it of everything which might afford pleasure to the taste. This is a self-mortification which she always practised, when she could do so without being seen.

This sojourn in the forests was not very agreeable to Catherine, although generally pleasant to the Indian women, because, freed from domestic cares, they pass their time in amusements and feasting. She longed without ceasing for the time to arrive, when they are accustomed to return to the village. The Church, the presence of Jesus Christ in the august Sacrament of the Altar, the holy Sacrifice of the Mass, the frequent exhortations, and the other exercises of the Mission, of which she was deprived while engaged in the chase—these were the only objects which interested her. She had no taste for anything else. She therefore formed the determination, that if she lived to return once more to the Mission, she would never again leave it. She arrived there near the time of Passion Week, and for the first time assisted in the ceremonies of those holy days.

I shall not stop, my Reverend Father, to describe to you here how deeply she was affected by a spectacle so touching as that of the sorrows and death of a God for the safety of men. She shed tears almost continually, and formed the resolution to bear, for the rest of her days, in her own body, the Cross of Jesus Christ. From that time she sought all occasions of self-mortification, perhaps to expiate those light faults which she regarded as so many outrages against the Divine Majesty, perhaps to trace in her the image of a God crucified for love of us. The conversations of Anastasia, who often talked with her of the pains of Hell,

and the severity which the saints exercised upon themselves, strengthened the desire she had for the austerities of penance. She found herself also animated to this course by an accident which placed her in great danger of losing her life. She was cutting a tree in the woods, which fell sooner than she expected; she had sufficient time, by drawing back, to shun the body of the tree, which would have crushed her by its fall; but she was not able to escape from one of the branches, which struck her violently on the head, and threw her senseless to the ground. She shortly afterwards recovered from her swoon, and those around heard her softly ejaculating, "I thank thee, O good Jesus, for having succored me in this danger." She did not doubt but that God had preserved her to give her time to expiate her sins by repentance. This she declared to a companion, who felt herself called, like Catherine, to a life of austerity, and with whom she was in so close an intimacy that they communicated to each other the most secret things which took place in their innermost souls. This new association had indeed so much influence on the life of Catherine, that I cannot refrain from speaking of it.

Therese (it is thus that she was named) had been baptized by Father Bruyas in the Iroquois country; but the licentiousness which prevailed among her people, and the evil example she always had before her eyes, caused her shortly to forget the vows of her baptism. Even a sojourn which she made after some time at the Mission, where she had come to live with his family, only produced a partial change in her life. A most strange adventure, however, which happened to her, operated at last to her conversion.

She had gone with her husband and a young nephew to the chase, near the river of the *Outaouacks*. On their way some other Indians joined them, and they made a company of eleven persons, that is, four men and four women, with three young persons. Therese was the only Christian. The snow, which this

year fell very late, prevented them from having any success in hunting, their provisions were in a short time consumed, and they were reduced to eat some skins, which they had brought with them to make moccasons. At length they eat the moccasons themselves, and finally, pressed by hunger, were obliged to sustain their lives principally by herbs and the bark of trees. In the meantime the husband of Therese fell dangerously ill, and the hunters were obliged to halt. Two among them, an *Agnié* and a *Tsonnontorian*, asked leave of the party to make an excursion to some distance in search of game, promising to return at the farthest in ten days. The *Agnié*, indeed, returned at the time appointed, but he came alone, and reported that the *Tsonnontouan* had perished by famine and misery. They suspected him of having murdered his companion, and then fed upon his flesh; for, although he declared that he had not found any game, he was nevertheless in full strength and health. A few days afterwards the husband of Therese died, experiencing in his last moments deep regret that he had not received baptism. The remainder of the company then resumed their journey, to attempt to reach the bank of the river and gain the French settlements. After two or three days' march, they became so enfeebled by want of nourishment, that they were not able to advance farther. Desperation then inspired them with a strange resolution, which was, to put some of their number to death, that the lives of the rest might be preserved. They, therefore, selected the wife of the Tsonnontouan and her two children, who were thus in succession devoured. This spectacle terrified Therese, for she had good reason to fear the same treatment. Then she reflected on the deplorable state in which conscience told her she was; she repented bitterly that she had ever entered the forest without having first purified herself by a full confession; she asked pardon of God for the disorders of her life, and promised to confess as soon as possible and undergo penance. Her prayer was heard,

and after incredible fatigues, she reached the village with four others, who alone remained of the company. She did, indeed, fulfil one part of the promise, for she confessed herself soon after her return, but she was more backward to reform her life and subject herself to the rigors of penance.

One day, while she was looking at the new Church they were building at the Sault, after they had removed thither the mission which before had been at the prairie of the Madeleine, she met with Catharine, who was also inspecting it. They saluted each other for the first time, and entering into conversation, Catherine asked her, which portion of the Church was to be set apart for the females. Therese pointed out the place which she thought would be appropriated to them. "Alas!" answered Catherine, with a sigh, "it is not in this material temple that God most loves to dwell. It is within ourselves that He wishes to take up His abode. Our hearts are the Temple which is most agreeable to Him. But, miserable being that I am, how many times have I forced Him to abandon this heart in which He should reign alone! And do I not deserve, that to punish me for my ingratitude, they should forever exclude me from this temple which they are raising to His glory?"

The humility of these sentiments deeply touched the heart of Therese. At the same time, she felt herself pressed by remorse of conscience to fulfil what she had promised to the Lord, and she did not doubt but that God had directed to her this holy female, to support her by her counsels and example in the new kind of life she wished to embrace. She therefore opened her heart to Catherine on the holy desires with which God had inspired her, and insensibly the conversation led them to disclose to each other their most secret thoughts. To converse with greater ease they went and sat at the foot of a cross which was erected on the banks of the River St. Lawrence. This first interview, which revealed the uniformity of their sentiments and

inclinations, began to strengthen the bonds of a holy friendship which lasted even to the death of Catherine. From this time they were inseparable. They went together to the Church, to the forest, and to their daily labor. They animated each other to the service of God by their religious conversations—they mutually communicated their pains and dislikes—they disclosed their faults—they encouraged each other to the practice of austere virtues—and thus were mutually of infinite service in advancing more and more in their views of perfection.

It was thus that God prepared Catherine for a new contest which her love of celibacy obliged her to undergo. Interested views inspired her sister with the design of marrying her. She supposed there was not a young man then in the Mission du Sault, who would not be ambitious of the honor of being united to so virtuous a female, and that thus having the whole village from which to make her choice, she would be able to select for her brother-in-law some able hunter who would bring abundance to the cabin. She expected indeed to meet with difficulties on the part of Catherine, for she she was not ignorant of the persecutions this generous girl had already suffered, and the constancy with which she had sustained them, but she persuaded herself that the force of reason would finally vanquish her opposition. She selected therefore a particular day, and after having shown Catherine even more affection than ordinary, she addressed her with that eloquence which is natural to these Indians, when they are engaged in anything which concerns their interests.

"I must confess, my dear sister," said she, with a manner full of sweetness and affability, "you are under great obligations to the Lord for having brought you, as well as ourselves, from our unhappy country, and for having conducted you to the Mission du Sault, where everything is favorable to your piety. If you are rejoiced to be here, I have no less satisfaction at having you with me. You every day indeed increase our pleasure

by the wisdom of your conduct, which draws upon you general esteem and approbation. There only remains one thing for you to do to complete our happiness, which is to think seriously of establishing yourself by a good and judicious marriage. All the young girls among us take this course; you are of an age to act as they do, and you are bound to do so even more particularly than others, either to shun the occasions of sin, or to supply the necessities of life. It is true that it is a source of great pleasure to us, both to your brother-in-law and myself, to furnish these things for you, but you know that he is in the decline of life, and that we are charged with the care of a large family. If you were to be deprived of us, to whom could you have recourse? Think of these things, Catherine; provide for yourself a refuge from the evils which accompany poverty; and determine as soon as possible to prepare to avoid them, while you can do it so easily, and in a way so advantageous both to yourself and to our family."

There was nothing which Catherine less expected than a proposition of this kind, but the kindness and respect she felt for her sister induced her to conceal her pain, and she contented herself with merely answering, that she thanked her for this advice, but the step was of great consequence and she would think of it seriously. It was thus that she warded off the first attack. She immediately came to seek me, to complain bitterly of these importunate solicitations of her sister. As I did not appear to accede entirely to her reasoning, and, for the purpose of proving her, dwelt on those considerations which ought to incline her to marriage, "Ah, my father," said she, "I am not any longer my own. I have given myself entirely to Jesus Christ, and it is not possible for me to change masters. The poverty with which I am threatened gives me no uneasiness. So little is requisite to supply the necessities of this wretched life, that my labor can furnish this, and I can always find some miserable rags to cover

me." I sent her away, saying, that she should think well on the subject, for it was one which merited the most serious attention.

Scarcely had she returned to the cabin, when her sister, impatient to bring her over to her views, pressed her anew to end her wavering by forming an advantageous settlement. But finding from the reply of Catherine, that it was useless to attempt to change her mind, she determined to enlist Anastasia in her interests, since they both regarded her as their mother. In this she was successful. Anastasia was readily induced to believe that Catherine had too hastily formed her resolution, and therefore employed all that influence which age and virtue gave her over the mind of the young girl, to persuade her that marriage was the only part she ought to take.

This measure however, had no greater success than the other, and Anastasia, who had always until that time found so much docility in Catherine, was extremely surprised at the little deference she paid to her counsels. She even bitterly reproached her, and threatened to bring her complaints to me. Catherine anticipated her in this, and after having related the pains they forced her to suffer to induce her to adopt a course so little to her taste, she prayed me to aid her in consummating the sacrifice she wished to make of herself to Jesus Christ, and to provide her a refuge from the opposition she had to undergo from Anastasia and her sister. I praised her design, but at the same time advised her to take yet three days to deliberate on an affair of such importance, and during that time to offer up extraordinary prayers that she might be better taught the will of God; after which, if she still persisted in her resolution, I promised her to put an end to the importunities of her relatives. She at first acquiesced in what I proposed, but in less than a quarter of an hour came back to seek me. "It is settled," said she, as she came near me; "it is not a question for deliberation; my part has long since been taken. No,

my Father, I can have no other spouse but Jesus Christ." I thought that it would be wrong for me any longer to oppose a resolution which seemed to me inspired by the Holy Spirit, and therefore exhorted her to perseverance, assuring her that I would undertake her defence against those who wished henceforth to disturb her on that subject. This answer restored her former tranquillity of mind, and reëstablished in her soul that inward peace which she preserved even to the end of her life.

Scarcely had she gone, when Anastasia came to complain in her turn, that Catherine would not listen to any advice, but followed only her own whims. She was running on in this strain, when I interrupted her by saying that I was acquainted with the cause of her dissatisfaction, but was astonished that a Christian as old as she was, could disapprove of an action which merited the highest praise, and that if she had faith, she ought to know the value of a state so sublime as that of celibacy, which rendered feeble men like to the angels themselves. At these words Anastasia seemed to be in a perfect dream, and as she possessed a deeply seated devotion of spirit, she almost immediately began to turn the blame upon herself; she admired the courage of this virtuous girl, and at length became the foremost to fortify her in the holy resolution she had taken. It was thus that God turned these different contradictions to be a benefit to his servant. And it also furnished Catherine with a new motive to serve God with greater fervor. She therefore added new practices to the ordinary exercises of piety. Feeble as she was, she redoubled her diligence in labor, her watchings, fastings, and other austerities.

It was then the end of autumn, when the Indians are accustomed to form their parties to go out to hunt during the winter in the forests. The sojourn which Catherine had already made there, and the pain she had suffered at being deprived of the religious privileges she possessed in the village, had induced her to form the resolution, as I have already mentioned, that she would

never during her life return there. I thought however that the change of air, and the diet, which is so much better in the forest, would be able to restore her health, which was now very much impaired. It was for this reason that I advised her to follow the family and others who went to the hunting grounds. She answered me in that deeply devotional manner which was so natural to her, "It is true, my Father, that my body is served most luxuriously in the forest, but the soul languishes there, and is not able to satisfy its hunger. On the contrary, in the village the body suffers; I am contented that it should be so, but the soul finds its delight in being near to Jesus Christ. Well then, I will willingly abandon this miserable body to hunger and suffering, provided that my soul may have its ordinary nourishment."

She remained therefore during the winter in the village, where she lived only on Indian corn, and was subjected indeed to much suffering. But not content with allowing her body only this insipid food, which could scarcely sustain it, she subjected it also to austerities and excessive penances, without taking counsel of any one, persuading herself that while the object was self-mortification, she was right in giving herself up to everything which could increase her fervor. She was incited to these holy exercises by the noble examples of self-mortification which she always had before her eyes. The spirit of penance reigned among the Christians at the Sault. Fastings, discipline carried even unto blood, belts lined with points of iron—these were their most common austerities. And some of them, by these voluntary macerations, prepared themselves, when the time came, to suffer the most fearful torments.

The war was once more rekindled between the French and the Iroquois, and the latter invited their countrymen who were at the Mission du Sault to return to their own country, where they promised them entire liberty in the exercise of their religion.

The refusal with which these offers were met transported them with fury, and the Christian Indians who remained at the Sault were immediately declared enemies of their nation. A party of Iroquois surprised some of them while hunting, and carried them away to their country, where they were burned by a slow fire. But these noble and faithful men, even in the midst of the most excruciating torments, preached Jesus Christ to those who were torturing them so cruelly, and conjured them, as soon as possible, to embrace Christianity, to deliver themselves from eternal fires. One in particular among them, named Etienne, signalized his constancy and faith. When environed by the burning flames, he did not cease to encourage his wife, who was suffering the same torture, to invoke with him the holy name of Jesus. Being on the point of expiring, he rallied all his strength, and in imitation of his Master, prayed the Lord with a loud voice for the conversion of those who had treated him with such inhumanity. Many of the savages, touched by a spectacle so new to them, abandoned their country and came to the Mission du Sault, to ask for baptism, and live there in accordance with the laws of the Gospel.

The women were not behind their husbands in the ardor they showed for a life of penance. They even went to such extremes, that when it came to our knowledge, we were obliged to moderate their zeal. Besides the ordinary instruments of mortification which they employed, they had a thousand new inventions to inflict suffering upon themselves. Some placed themselves in the snow when the cold was most severe; others stripped themselves to the waist in retired places, and remained a long time exposed to the rigor of the season, on the banks of a frozen river, and where the wind was blowing with violence. There were even those who, after having broken the ice in the ponds, plunged themselves in up to the neck, and remained there as long as it was necessary for them to recite many times the ten beads of their rosary. One of them did this three nights in succession;

and it was the cause of so violent a fever, that it was thought she would have died of it. Another one surprised me extremely by her simplicity. I learned that, not content with having herself used this mortification, she had also plunged her daughter, but three years old, into the frozen river, from which she drew her out half dead. When I sharply reproached her indiscretion, she answered me with a surprising *naïveté*, that she did not think she was doing anything wrong, but that knowing her daughter would one day certainly offend the Lord, she had wished to impose on her in advance the pain which her sin merited.

Although those who inflicted these mortifications on themselves were particular to conceal them from the knowledge of the public, yet Catherine, who had a mind quick and penetrating, did not fail from various appearances to conjecture that which they held so secret, and as she studied every means to testify more and more her love to Jesus Christ, she applied herself to examine everything that was done pleasing to the Lord, that she might herself immediately put it in practice. It was for this reason that while passing some days at Montreal, where for the first time she saw the nuns, she was so charmed with their modesty and devotion, that she informed herself most thoroughly with regard to the manner in which these holy sisters lived, and the virtues which they practiced. Having learned that they were Christian virgins, who were consecrated to God by a vow of perpetual continence, she gave me no peace until I had granted her permission to make the same sacrifice of herself, not by a simple resolution to guard her virginity, such as she had already made, but by an irrevocable engagement which obliged her to belong to God without any recall. I would not, however, give my consent to this step until I had well proved her, and been anew convinced that it was the spirit of God acting in this excellent girl, which had thus inspired her with a design of which there had never been an example among the Indians.

For this great event she chose the day on which we celebrate the Festival of the Annunciation of the most holy Virgin. The moment after she had received our Lord in the holy Communion, she pronounced with admirable fervor the vow she had made of perpetual virginity. She then addressed the Holy Virgin, for whom she had a most tender devotion, praying her to present to her son the oblation of herself which she had just made; after which she passed some hours at the foot of the altar in holy meditation and in perfect union with God.

From that time Catherine seemed to be entirely divorced from this world, and she aspired continually to Heaven, where she had fixed all her desires. She seemed even to taste in anticipation the sweetness of that heavenly state; but her body was not sufficiently strong to sustain the weight of her austerities, and the constant effort of her spirit to maintain itself in the presence of God. She was at length seized with a violent illness, from which she never entirely recovered. There always remained an affection of the stomach, accompanied by frequent vomiting, and a slow fever, which undermined her constitution by degrees, and threw her into a weakness which insensibly wasted her away. It was, however, evident that her soul acquired new strength in proportion as her body decayed. The nearer she approached the termination of her career, the more clearly she shone forth in all those virtues which she had practiced with so much edification. But I need not stop here to particularize them to you, except to mention a few of those which made the most impression and were the source and spring of all the others.

She had a most tender love for God. Her only pleasure seemed to be, to keep herself in contemplation in his presence, to meditate on His majesty and mercy, to sing His praises. and continually to desire new ways of pleasing Him. It was principally to prevent distraction from other thoughts that she so often withdrew into solitude. Anastasia and Therese were the only

two Christians with whom she wished much to associate, because they talked most of God, and their conversations breathed nothing but divine love.

From thence arose the peculiar devotion she had for the Holy Eucharist and the Passion of our Saviour. These two mysteries of the love of the same God, concealed under the veil of the Eucharist and His dying on the cross, ceaselessly occupied her spirit, and kindled in her heart the purest flames of love. Every day she was seen to pass whole hours at the foot of the altar, immoveable as if transported beyond herself. Her eyes often explained the sentiments of her breast by the abundance of tears she shed, and in these tears she found so great delight that she was, as it were, insensible to the most severe cold of winter. Often seeing her benumbed with cold, I have sent her to the cabin to warm herself; she obeyed immediately, but the moment after returned to the Church, and continued there in long communion with Jesus Christ.

To keep alive her devotion for the mystery of our Saviour's Passion, and to have it always present to her mind, she carried on her breast a little crucifix which I had given her. She often kissed it with feelings of the most tender compassion for the suffering Jesus, and with the most vivid remembrance of the benefits of our redemption. One day wishing particularly to honor Jesus Christ in this double mystery of His love, after having received the Holy Communion, she made a perpetual oblation of her soul to Jesus in the Eucharist, and of her body to Jesus attached to the cross; and thenceforth, she was ingenious to imagine every day new ways of afflicting and crucifying her flesh.

During the winter, while she was in the forest with her companions, she would follow them at a distance, taking off her shoes and walking with her naked feet over the ice and snow. Having heard Anastasia say, that of all torments that of fire was the most frightful, and that the constancy of the martyrs who had suffered

this torture would be a great merit with the Lord, the following night she burned her feet and limbs with a hot brand, very much in the same way that the Indians mark their slaves, persuading herself that by this action she had declared herself the slave of her Saviour. At another time she strewed the mat on which she slept with large thorns, the points of which were very sharp, and after the example of the holy and thrice happy Saint Louis de Gonzague, she rolled herself for three nights in succession on these thorns, which caused her the most intense pain. In consequence of these things her countenance was entirely wasted and pale, which those around her attributed to illness. But Therese, the companion whom she had taken so much into her confidence, having discovered the reason of this extraordinary paleness, aroused her scruples by declaring, that she might offend God if she inflicted such austerities on herself without the permission of her Confessor. Catherine, who trembled at the very appearance of sin, came immediately to find me, to confess her fault and demand pardon of God. I blamed her indiscretion, and directed her to throw the thorns into the fire. She did so immediately, for she had an implicit submission to the judgment of those who directed her conscience, and enlightened as she was by that illumination with which God favored her, she never manifested the least attachment to her own will.

Her patience was the proof of all her acquirements. In the midst of her continual infirmities, she always preserved a peace and serenity of spirit which charmed us. She never forgot herself either to utter a complaint or give the slightest sign of impatience. During the last two months of her life her sufferings were extraordinary. She was obliged to remain night and day in the same position, and the least movement caused her the most intense pain. But when these pains were felt with the greatest severity, then she seemed most content, esteeming herself happy, as she

herself said, to live and to die on the Cross, uniting her sufferings to those of her Saviour.

As she was full of faith, she had a high idea of everything relating to religion, and this inspired her with a particular respect for those whom God called to the holy ministry. Her hope was firm, her love disinterested, serving God for the sake of God himself, and influenced only by the desire to please Him. Her devotion was tender, even to tears, her communion with God intimate and uninterrupted, never losing sight of Him in all her actions, and it was this which raised her in so short a time to so sublime a state of piety.

In short, there was nothing more remarkable in Catherine than this angelical purity, of which she was so jealous, and which she preserved even to her latest breath. It was indeed a miracle of grace, that a young Iroquois should have had so strong an attachment to a virtue so little known in her own country, and that she should have lived in such innocence of life during twenty years that she remained in the very midst of licentiousness and dissoluteness. It was this love of purity which produced in her heart so tender an affection for the Queen of Virgins. Catherine could never speak of Our Lady but with transport. She had learned by heart her Litanies, and recited them all, particularly in the evening, after the common-prayers of the cabin. She always carried with her a rosary, which she recited many times in the course of the day. The Saturdays and other days which are particularly consecrated to her honor, she devoted to extraordinary austerities, and devoted herself to the practical imitation of some of her virtues. She redoubled her fervor when they celebrated one of these Festivals, and she selected such holy days to offer to God some new sacrifice, or to renew those which she had already made.

It was to be expected that so holy a life would be followed by a most happy death. And so it was in the last moments of her life, that she edified us most by the practice of her virtues. and

above all by her patience and union with God. She found herself very ill towards the time that the men are accustomed to go out to the hunting grounds in the forest, and when the females are occupied from morning even till evening in the fields. Those who are ill are therefore obliged to remain alone through the whole day in their cabins, a plate of Indian corn and a little water having in the morning been placed near their mat. It was in this abandonment that Catherine passed all the time of her last illness. But what would have overwhelmed another person with sadness, contributed rather to increase her joy by furnishing her with something to increase her merit. Accustomed to commune alone with God, she turned this solitude to her profit, and made it serve to attach her more to her Creator by her prayers and fervent meditations.

Nevertheless, the time of her last struggle approached and her strength each day diminished. She failed considerably during the Tuesday of Holy Week, and I therefore thought it well to administer to her the Holy Communion, which she recieved with her usual feelings of devotion. I wished also at the same time to give her Extreme Unction, but she told me there was as yet no pressing necessity, and from what she said I thought I would defer it till the next morning. The rest of that day and the following night she passed in fervent communion with our Lord and the Holy Virgin. On Wednesday morning she received Extreme Unction with the same feelings of devotion, and at three hours after mid-day, after having pronounced the holy names of JESUS and MARY, a slight spasm came on, when she entirely lost the power of speech. As she preserved a perfect consciousness even to her last breath, I perceived that she was striving to perform inwardly all the acts which I suggested to her. After a short half hour of agony, she peaceably expired, as if she was only falling into a sweet sleep.

Thus died Catherine Tegahkouita in the twenty-fourth year

of her age, having filled the Mission with the odor of her sanctity and the character of holiness which she left behind her. Her countenance, which had been extremely attenuated by the maladies and constant austerities, appeared so changed and pleasant some moments after her death, that the Indians who were present were not able to restrain the expression of their astonishment, and declared, that a beam of that glory she had gone to possess was even reflected back on her body. Two Frenchmen who had come from the prairie of the Madeleine to assist in the services of Thursday morning, seeing her extended on her mat with her countenance so fresh and sweet, said one to the other, "See how peaceably that young female sleeps!" But they were very much surprised when they learned a moment after, that it was the body of Catherine who had just expired. They immediately retraced their steps, and casting themselves on their knees at her feet, recommended themselves to her prayers. They even wished to give a public evidence of the veneration they had for the deceased, by immediately assisting to make the coffin which was to enclose those holy relics.

I make use of this expression, my Reverend Father, with the greater confidence, because God did not delay to honor the memory of this virtuous girl by an infinite number of miraculous cures, which took place after her death, and which still continue to take place daily through her intercession. This is a fact well known, not only to the Indians, but also to the French at Quebec and Montreal, who often make pilgrimages to her tomb to fulfil their vows, or to return thanks for favors which she has obtained for them in Heaven. I could here relate to you a great number of these miraculous cures, which have been attested by individuals the most enlightened, and whose probity is above suspicion; but I will content myself with making you acquainted with the testimony of two persons remarkable for virtue and merit, who having themselves proved the power of this sainted female with

God, felt they were bound to leave a public monument for posterity, to satisfy at the same time their piety and their gratitude.

The first testimonial is that of M. de la Colombière, Canon of the Cathedral of Quebec, Grand-Vicar of the Diocese. He expresses himself in these terms:

"Having been ill at Quebec during the past year, from the "month of January even to the month of June, of a slow fever, "against which all remedies had been tried in vain, and of a "diarrhœa, which even ipecacuana could not cure, it was thought "well that I should record a vow, in case it should please God to "relieve me of these two maladies, to make a pilgrimage to the "Mission of St. Francis Xavier, to pray at the tomb of Cathe-"rine Tegahkouita. On the very same day the fever ceased, and "the diarrhœa having become better, I embarked some days af-"terwards to fulfil my vow. Scarcely had I accomplished one "third of my journey, when I found myself perfectly cured. As "my health is something so very useless that I should not have "dared to ask for it, if I had not felt myself obliged to do so by "the deference which I ought to have for the servants of the "Lord, it is impossible reasonably to withhold the belief, that "God in according to me this grace, had no other view than to "make known the credit which this excellent maiden had with "Him. For myself I should fear that I was unjustly with-"holding the truth, and refusing to the Missions of Canada "the glory which is due to them, if I did not testify as I have "now done, that I am a debtor for my cure to this Iroquois vir-"gin. It is for this reason that I have given the present attes-"tation with every sentiment of gratitude of which I am capa-"ble, to increase, as far as is in my power, the confidence which "is felt in my benefactress, but still more to excite the desire to "to imitate her virtues. Given at Villemarie, the 14th of Sep-"tember, 1696. "J. DE LA COLOMBIERE, P. J.,

"Canon of the Cathedral of Quebec."

The second testimonial is from M. du Luth, Captain in the Marine Corps, and Commander of Fort Frontinac. It is thus that he speaks:

"I, the subscriber, certify to all whom it may concern, that "having been tormented by the gout for the space of twenty- "three years, and with such severe pains that it gave me no rest "for the space of three months at a time, I addressed myself to "Catherine Tegahkouita, an Iroquois virgin, deceased at the "Sault Saint Louis in the reputation of sanctity, and I promised "her to visit her tomb, if God should give me health through her "intercession. I have been so perfectly cured, at the end of one "novena* which I made in her honor, that after five months I "have not perceived the slightest touch of my gout. Given at "Fort Frontinac, this 15th of August, 1696.

"J. DU LUTH,

"Capt. of the Marine Corps, Commander of Fort Frontinac."

I have thought that a narrative of the virtues of this holy female, born thus in the midst of heathenism and among savages, would serve to edify those who having been born in the bosom of Christianity, have also every possible aid in raising themselves to the height of holiness.

I have the honor to be, &c.

[* A novena is a course of devotional services extending through nine days.]

THE IROQUOIS MARTYRS.

1688—1693.

LETTER V.

FROM FATHER CHOLLONEC, MISSIONARY OF THE SOCIETY OF JESUS IN NEW FRANCE, TO FATHER JEAN-BAPTISTE DU HALDE OF THE SAME SOCIETY.

MY REVEREND FATHER,

The Peace of our Lord be with you :

I HAVE learned with much consolation that you have been edified in France by the account which I sent of the virtues of a young Iroquois virgin, who died here in the odor of sanctity, and whom we regard as the Protectress of this colony. It is the mission of St. Francis Xavier du Sault which trained her to Christianity, and the impressions which such examples have left there still remain, and will remain for a long time, as we hope, through the mercy of God. Long before it occurred, she had predicted the glorious death of some Christians of this Mission, and we have reason to believe that she is the one who, from the Heaven where she is placed, has sustained the courage of these generous devoted men, who have signalized their constancy and faith in the midst of the most frightful sufferings. I will relate to you, therefore, in a few words, the history of these fervent neophytes, for I am persuaded that you will be touched by it.

The settlements of the Iroquois had been gradually depopulated by the desertion of many families, who took refuge in the Mission du Sault, for the purpose of embracing Christianity there. Etienne *te Ganonakoa* was of this number. He came to reside

there with his wife, a sister-in-law, and six children. He was then about thirty-five years of age; his natural disposition had nothing in it that was barbarous, and the stability of his marriage in a country where the most perfect license reigns, and where they easily change their wives, was one evidence of the innocency of the life which he had led. All the new comers urgently desired baptism, and it was granted them after the customary probation and instructions. We were immediately edified in the village by the union which evidently existed in this family, and the care with which they honored God. Etienne watched the education of his children with a zeal worthy of a missionary. Every day, both morning and evening, he sent them to prayers, and to the instructions which are provided for those of that age. Nor did he fail himself to set them an example, by the constancy of his attendance at all the exercises of the Mission, and by his frequent participation in the Sacraments.

It was by such a course of Christian conduct that he prepared himself to triumph over the enemies of religion, and to defend his faith in the midst of the most cruel torments. The Iroquois had used every means to induce those of their countrymen who were at the Sault to return to their native land. But their prayers and presents having been found useless, they resorted to menaces, and signified to them. that if they persisted in their refusal, they should no longer regard them as relatives or friends, but their hate become irreconcilable, and they would treat them as declared enemies. The war which was then existing between the French and Iroquois furnished them with a pretext for spending their rage on those of their countrymen who, after having thus deserted them, fell into their hands. It was at this time, in the month of August, 1690, that Etienne set out for the purpose of hunting, in the autumn, accompanied by his wife and another Indian of the Sault. In the following month of September, these three neophytes were surprised in the woods by a party of the enemy,

consisting of fourteen *Goïogoens*, who seized them, bound them, and carried them away prisoners into their country.

As soon as Etienne saw himself at the mercy of the *Goïogoens*, he did not for a moment doubt but that he would shortly be delivered up to a most cruel death. He expressed himself thus to his wife, and recommended to her, above all things, to remain steadfast to her faith, and in case she should ever be permitted to return to the Sault, to bring up her children in the fear of God. During the whole journey he did not cease exhorting her to constancy, and endeavoring to fortify her against the dangers to which she was about to be exposed among those of her own nation.

The three captives were conducted, not to *Goïogoen*, where it was most natural that they should carry them, but to *Onnoncagué*. God determined, it seemed, that the steadfastness and constancy of Etienne should shine forth in a place, which was at that time celebrated for the crowds of savages who were assembled about it, and who, while there, plunged themselves in the most infamous debaucheries. Although it is their custom to await the arrival of their captives at the entrance of the village, yet the joy they felt at having some of the inhabitants of the Sault in their power, induced them to go forth a great distance from their setttlement to meet their prey. They had arrayed themselves in their finest dresses as for a day of triumph—they were armed with knives and hatchets and clubs, and anything on which they could lay their hands, while fury was painted on their countenances. As soon as they joined the captives, one of the Indians came up to Etienne. "My brother," said he, "your end has come. It is not we who put you to death, but you sealed your own fate when you left us to live among the Christian dogs." "It is true," answered Etienne, "that I am a Christian, but it is no less true that I glory in being one. Inflict on me what you please, for I fear neither your outrages nor torments. I willingly give up my life for that God who has shed all his blood for me."

Scarcely had he uttered these words, when they furiously threw themselves upon him, and cut him cruelly on his arms, his thighs, and over his whole body, which in an instant they covered with blood. They cut off several of his fingers, and tore out his nails. Then, one of the troop cried out to him, "pray to God." "Yes, I will pray to him," said Etienne; and raising his bound hands, he made as far as he was able the sign of the cross, at the same time pronouncing with a loud voice, in their language, these words, "In the name of the Father," &c. Immediately they cut off half his fingers which remained, and cried to him a second time, "pray to God now." Etienne made anew the sign of the cross, and the instant that he did so, they cut off all his fingers down to the palm of his hand. Then a third time they invited him to pray to God, insulting him, and pouring out against him all the injuries which their rage could dictate. As this generous neophyte commenced the attempt to make the sign of the cross with the palm of his hand, they cut it off entirely. Not content with these first sallies of fury, they gashed his flesh on all the places which he had marked with the sign of the cross, that is to say, on his forehead, on his stomach, and from one shoulder to the other, as if to efface those august marks of religion, which he had impressed there.

After this bloody prelude, they conducted the prisoners to the village. They at first bound Etienne before a large fire which they had kindled there, and in which they had heated some stones red-hot. These stones they placed between his thighs, and pressed them violently against each other They then ordered him to chant after the Iroquois manner, and when he refused to do so, and, on the contrary, repeated in a loud voice the prayers he was accustomed to recite every day, one of the furious savages about him seized a burning brand, and struck him forcibly on the mouth; then, without giving him time to breathe, they bound him to the stake.

When the neophyte found himself in the midst of the red-hot irons and burning brands, far from showing any fear, he cast a tranquil look upon all the ferocious brutes who surrounded him, and spoke to them thus: "Satisfy yourselves, my brethren, with the barbarous pleasure you experience in burning me; do not spare me, for my sins merit much more of suffering than you can procure me; the more you torment me, the more you augment the recompense which is prepared for me in Heaven."

These words served only to inflame their fury. The savages all with a kind of emulation, seized the burning brands and red-hot irons, with which they slowly burned all the body of Etienne. The courageous neophyte suffered all these torments without allowing a single sigh to escape him. He seemed to be perfectly tranquil, his eyes being raised to heaven, whither his soul was drawn in continual prayer. At length, when he perceived his strength failing, he requested a cessation for a few moments, and then reviving all his fervor, he uttered his last prayer. He commended his soul to Jesus Christ, and prayed him to pardon his death to those who had treated him with so much inhumanity. At last, after new torments suffered with the same constancy, he gave up his soul to his Creator, triumphing, by his courage, over all the cruelty of the Iroquois.

They granted her life to his wife, as he had predicted to her. She remained sometime longer a prisoner in their country, but without either entreaties or threats being able to vanquish her faith. Having returned to *Agnié*, which was her native place, she remained there until her son came to seek her, and conducted her back to the Sault.

With regard to the Indian who was taken at the same time with Etienne, he escaped with the loss of some of his fingers which were cut off, and a deep cut which he received on his leg. He was carried afterwards to *Goïogoens*, where they granted him his life. They used every effort to induce him to marry there

and live in the customary debauchery of the nation; but he answered constantly, that his religion forbade him to indulge in these excesses. At last, having gone towards Montreal with a party of warriors, he secretly withdrew from his companions, and returned to the Mission du Sault, where he has lived since with much piety.

Two years afterwards, a female of the same Mission gave an example of constancy equal to that of Etienne, and finished her life, as he did, in the flames. She was named Françoise *Gonannhatenha.* She was from Onnontagué, and had been baptized by the Father Fremin. All the Mission was edified by her piety, her modesty, and the charity she exercised towards the poor. As she herself had abundance, she divided her goods among many families, who were thus sustained by her liberality. Having lost her first husband, she married a virtuous Christian who as well as herself was from *Onnontagué*, and who had lived a long time at *Chasteau-Guay*, which is three leagues distant from the Sault. He passed all his summers there in fishing, and happened to be actually there when news was received of an incursion of the enemy. Immediately Françoise placed herself in a canoe with two of her friends, to go in search of her husband, and deliver him from the peril in which he was involved. They arrived there in time, and the little party thought itself in security, when at the distance of only a quarter of a league from the Sault, they were unexpectedly surprised by armed enemies, who were composed of the *Onnontagués*, the *Tsonnontorians*, and the *Goïogoens.* They immediately cut off her husband's head, and the three women were carried away prisoners.

The cruelty which was exercised towards them the first night which they passed in the Iroquois camp, led them to realize that the most inhuman treatment awaited them. The savages diverted themselves with tearing out their nails, and burning their fingers in their pipes, which is, they say, a most dreadful torture.

Their runners carried to *Onnontagué* the news of the prize which they had taken, and the two friends of Françoise were immediately given to *Onneiout* and to *Tsonnontorian*, while Françoise herself was surrendered to her own sister, who was a person of great consideration in the village. But she, putting aside the tenderness which her nature and blood should have inspired her, abandoned her to the discretion of the old men and warriors, that is to say, she destined her to the fire.

No sooner had the prisoners arrived at *Onnontagué*, than they forced Françoise to ascend a scaffolding which was erected in the middle of the village. There, in the presence of her relatives and all her nation, she declared with a loud voice that she was a Christian of the Mission du Sault, and that she thought herself happy to die in her country and by the hands of her kinsmen, after the example of Jesus Christ, who had been placed on the cross by the members of His own nation, whom he had loaded with benefits.

One of the relatives of the neophyte who was present, had made a journey to the Sault five years before, for the purpose of inducing her to return with him. But all the artifices which he employed to persuade her to abandon the Mission were useless. She constantly answered him, that she prized her faith more than she did either country or life, and that she was not willing to risk so precious a treasure. The savage had for a long time nourished in his heart the indignation which he had conceived on account of this resistance, and now, being again still more irrritated by listening to the speeches of Françoise, he sprang on the scaffolding, snatched from her a crucifix which hung from her neck, and with a knife which he held in his hand, made on her breast a double gash in the form of a cross. "Hold," said he, "see the cross which you esteem so much, and which prevented you leaving the Sault when I took the trouble to go and seek you." "I thank you, my brother," Françoise answered him, "It

was possible to lose the cross which you have taken from me, but you have given me one which I can lose only with my life."

She continued afterwards to address her countrymen on the mysteries of her faith, and she spoke with a force and unction which were far beyond her ability and talents. "In fine," said she, in concluding, "however frightful may be the torments to which you destine me, do not think that my lot will be to complain. Tears and groans rather become you. This fire which you kindle for my punishment, will only last a few hours, but for you a fire which will never be extinguished is prepared in hell. Nevertheless, you still have the opportunity to escape it. Follow my example, become Christians, live according to the rules of this so holy law, and you will avoid these eternal flames. Still however I declare to you, that I do not wish any evil to those whom I see preparing everything to take away my life. Not only do I pardon them for my death, but I again pray the Sovereign Arbiter of life and death to open their eyes to the truth, to touch their hearts, to give them grace to be converted and to die Christians like myself."

These words of Françoise, far from softening their savage hearts, only increased their fury. For three nights in succession they led her about through all the wigwams to make sport for the brutal populace. On the fourth they bound her to the stake to burn her. These furies applied to her, in all parts of her body, burning brands, and gun-barrels red-hot. This suffering lasted many hours, without this holy victim giving utterance to the least cry. She had her eyes ceaselessly elevated to Heaven, and one would have said that she was insensible to these excruciating pains. M. de Saint Michel, Seigneur of the place of that name, who was then a prisoner at *Onnontagué*, and who escaped as if by miracle from the hands of the Iroquois, only one hour before he was to have been burned, related to us all these circumstances of which he was a witness. Curiosity attracted around him all the inhab-

itants of Montreal, and the simple account of what he had seen, drew tears from every one. They were never tired of hearing him speak of a courage which seemed so wonderful.

When the Iroquois have amused themselves a sufficient length of time with burning their prisoners by a slow process, they cut them round the head, take off their scalp, cover the crown of the head with hot ashes, and take them down from the stake. After which they take a new pleasure in making them seen, pursuing them with terrific shouts, and beating them unmercifully with stones. They adopted this plan with Françoise. M. de Saint-Michel says that the spectacle made him shudder; but a moment afterwards he was excited even to tears, when he saw this virtuous neophyte throw herself on her knees, and raising her eyes to heaven offer to God in sacrifice the last breath of life which remained. She was immediately overwhelmed with a shower of stones which the Iroquois cast at her, and died, as she had lived, in the exercise of prayer, and in union with our Lord.

In the following year a third victim of the Mission du Sault was sacrificed to the fury of the Iroquois. Her sex, her extreme youth, and the excess of torment which they caused her to suffer, rendered her constancy most memorable. She was named Marguerite *Garongouas*, twenty-four years of age, a native of *Onnontagué*, and had received Baptism at the age of thirteen. She was married shortly afterwards, and God blessed her marriage in giving her four children, whom she brought up with great care in the precepts of religion. The youngest was yet at the breast, and she was carrying it in her arms at the time of her capture.

It was in the autumn of the year 1693, that having gone to visit her field at a quarter of a league from the fort, she fell into the hands of two savages of *Onnontagué*, who were from her own country, and it is even probable that they were her relatives. The joy which had been felt at *Onnontagué* at the capture of the first two Christians of the Sault, led these savages to believe that

this new capture would win for them the greatest applause. They therefore carried her with all speed to *Onnontagué*.

At the first news of her arrival, all the Indians poured out of the village, and went to await the prisoner on an eminence which it was necessary for her to pass. A new fury seemed to possess their minds. As soon as Marguerite came in sight, she was received with frightful cries, and when she reached the eminence, she saw herself surrounded by all the savages, to the number of more than four hundred. They first snatched her infant from her, then tore off her clothes, and at last cast themselves upon her pell-mell, and began cutting her with their knives, until her whole body seemed to be but one wound. One of our Frenchmen who was a witness of this terrible spectacle, attributed it to a kind of miracle, that she did not expire on the spot. Marguerite saw him, and calling him by name, exclaimed, "Alas! you see my destiny, that only a few moments more of life remain to me. God be thanked however, I do not at all shrink from death, however cruel may be the form in which it awaits me. My sins merit even greater pains. Pray the Lord that He will pardon them to me, and give me strength to suffer." She spoke this with a loud voice, and in their language. One cannot be sufficiently astonished, that in the sad state to which she was reduced, she had so much spirit remaining.

After a little while they conducted her to the cabin of a French woman, an inhabitant of Montreal, who was also a prisoner. She availed herself of the opportunity to encourage Marguerite, and to exhort her to suffer with constancy these short-lived pains, in view of the eternal recompense by which they would be followed. Marguerite thanked her for her charitable counsels, and repeated to her what she had already said, that she had no fears of death, but would meet it with good courage. She added also, that since her baptism she had prayed to God for grace to suffer for his love, and that seeing her body

so mangled, she could not doubt but that God had favorably heard her prayer. She was therefore contented to die, and wished no evil to her relatives or countrymen who were about to be her executioners, but on the contrary, she prayed God to pardon their crime, and give them grace to be converted to the faith. It is indeed a remarkable fact, that the three neophytes of whom I have spoken, all prayed in the hour of death for the salvation of those who were treating them so cruelly; and this is a most tangible proof of the spirit of charity which reigned at the Mission du Sault.

These two captives were conversing on eternal truths, and the happiness of the saints in Heaven when a party of twenty savages came to seek Marguerite, to conduct her to the place where she was to be burned. They paid no regard to her youth, nor her sex, nor her country, nor the advantage she possessed in being the daughter of one of the most distinguished men of the village, one who held the rank of chief among them, and in whose name all the affairs of the nation were carried on. These things would certainly have saved the life of any one else but a Christian of the Mission du Sault.

Marguerite was then bound to the stake, where they burned her over her whole body with a cruelty which it is not easy to describe. She suffered this long and severe torture without showing the least sign of sorrow. They only heard her invoke the holy names of Jesus, of Mary, and of Joseph, and pray them to sustain her in this rude conflict, even until her sacrifice was completed. From time to time she asked for a little water, but after some reflection, she prayed them to refuse it to her, even when she might ask for it. "My Saviour," said she, "was thirsty while dying for me upon the Cross. Is it not right therefore, that I should suffer the same inconvenience?" The Iroquois tormented her from noon even to sunset. In the impatience they felt to see her draw her last breath, before the night

should oblige them to retire, they unbound her from the stake, took off her scalp, covered her head with the hot cinders, and ordered her to run. She on the contrary, threw herself on her knees, and raising her eyes and hands to Heaven, commended her soul to the Lord. The barbarians then struck her on the head many blows of a club without her discontinuing her prayer, until at last one of them, crying out, "Is it not possible for this Christian dog to die?" took a new knife and thrust it into the lower part of her stomach. The knife, although struck forward with great swiftness, snapped off to the entire astonishment of the savages, and the pieces fell at her feet. Another then took the stake itself to which she had been bound, and struck her violently on the head. As she still gave some signs of life, they heaped on the fire a pile of dry wood which happened to be in that place, and then cast her body on it, where it was shortly consumed. It is from thence that Marguerite went without doubt to receive in Heaven the recompense which was merited by a sainted life terminated by so precious a death.

It was natural that they should grant its life to her child. But an Iroquois to whom it had been given, wished to avenge himself on it for an affront which he thought he had received from the French. Three days after the death of Marguerite, they were surprised at hearing, at the beginning of the night, the cry of death. At this cry, all the savages sallied forth from their cabins to repair to the place from which it proceeded. The inhabitant of Montreal, of whom I have spoken, ran thither with the rest. There they found a fire burning, and the infant ready to be cast into it. The savages could not help being softened at this spectacle; but this was still more the case, when the infant, who was but a year old, raising its little hands to heaven, with a sweet smile, called three times on its mother, showing by its gesture that it wished to embrace her. The inhabitant of Montreal did not doubt but that its mother had appeared to it.

It is at least probable, that she had asked from God that her child should be reunited to her before long, that it might be preserved from the licentious training it would have, which would withdraw it as far as possible from Christianity. Although, as it happened, the infant was not abandoned to the flames, for one of the most considerable men of the village delivered it from them; yet it was only to devote it to a death scarcely less cruel. He took it by the feet, and raising it in the air, dashed its head against a stone.

I cannot forbear, my Reverend Father, speaking to you once more of a fourth neophyte of this Mission, who, although he escaped the fire which was prepared for him, nevertheless had the happiness of giving his life rather than be exposed to the danger of losing his faith. It was a young *Agnié*, named *Haonhouentsiontaouet.* He was captured by a party of the *Agniés*, who carried him away as a slave into their own country. As he had many relations, they granted him his life, and gave him to those who belonged to the same family. These were urgent in their solicitations that he should live according to the customs of the nation; that is to say, indulge in all the disorders of a licentious life. Etienne, far from listening to them, gave in reply the truths of salvation, which he explained with much force and unction, and ceaselessly exhorted them to go with him to the Mission du Sault, there to embrace Christianity. But he spoke to people born and educated in vice, the habit of which was too sweet to enable them to quit it. Thus, the example and the exhortations of the neophyte served no other purpose than to render them more guilty in the sight of God.

As it seemed that his residence at *Agnié* was of no advantage to his relatives, and that it might be even dangerous to his own salvation, he adopted the resolution to return to the Sault. He disclosed his intention to those around him, and they consented to it the more willingly, because they saw that they would thus

be delivered from an importunate censor, who was continually condemning the vices of the nation. He therefore a second time quitted his country and his family, for the sake of preserving that faith which was more dear to him than everything else.

Scarcely, however, had he set out on his journey, when the report of his departure spread through the wigwams. It was particularly mentioned in one, in which some intoxicated young men were at that time actually engaged in a debauch. They were enraged against Etienne, and after pouring out their abuse against him, concluded that it would not do to suffer him thus to prefer the Christian settlement to his own country, that this was an affront which reflected on the whole nation, and that they were bound to constrain the Christian dog to return to the village, or cut off his head, for the purpose of intimidating those who might be tempted to follow his example.

Three of them, therefore, immediately armed themselves with hatchets, and ran after Etienne. They shortly came up with him, and holding a hatchet raised over his head, said roughly, "Retrace your steps and follow us. It will be your death to resist, for we have orders from the Sachems to cut off your head." Etienne answered them with his usual sweetness, that they were masters of his life, but that he preferred losing that to risking his faith and salvation in their village; that he was, therefore, going to the Mission du Sault, where he was resolved to live and die.

As he saw that after this particular declaration of his sentiments, these brutes would undoubtedly destroy him, he requested them to give him a few moments in which to pray to God. They had this condescension, intoxicated as they were, and Etienne threw himself on his knees, and tranquilly offered up his prayer, in which he thanked God for the grace which had been given him to be a Christian. He prayed, too, for his heathen relatives, and in particular for his murderers, who, at that very moment, raised their hatchets and split open his head.

We were informed of the particulars of this death, so noble and Christian, by some *Agniés*, who came shortly after to fix their residence at the Mission du Sault.

I will finish this letter by the history of another Christian of this Mission, whose life has been a model of patience and piety. It was the earliest companion of Catherine *Tegahkouita*, and the most faithful imitator of her virtues. Jeanne *Gouastahra*, for such was her name, was of the nation of the *Onneiout*. She was married to a young *Agnié* at the Mission of Notre-Dame de Lorette, and her natural sweetness of character and rare virtue ought to have attracted to her all the tenderness of her husband. But the young man abandoned himself to the customary vices of his nation, that is to say, to intemperance and licentiousness, and his dissoluteness was to the neophyte a constant source of bad treatment. He sometime afterwards left the village of Lorette, and became a wanderer and a vagabond. His virtuous wife, however, was not willing to leave him. She followed him wherever he went, in the hope of at last inducing him to return to himself and thus gaining him to Jesus Christ; she endured his debaucheries and brutalities with unalterable patience; she even practised frequent austerities in secret, to obtain his conversion from God. The unhappy man took it into his head to come to the Sault, where he had relatives, and she accompanied him thither, and exhibited towards him those attentions and acts of kindness which should have been able to soften the hardest heart. At last, after many changes, having plunged deeply into licentiousness and dissoluteness, he entirely renounced his faith, and returned to the *Agniés*. This was the only place to which the neophyte refused to follow him. She had, however, the prudence to go and live at Lorette, with the relatives of her unworthy husband, hoping that this last proof of complaisance would induce him to abandon his debaucheries. But she had not passed a year there, when she learned that this apostate had been killed by

some savages, whose wigwam he had attacked when he had gone out after a debauch which had been extended to the last excess.

A death so bad touched her deeply. Although she was still in the flower of her age, she forever renounced all thoughts of the marriage state, and determined to pass the rest of her days near the tomb of Catherine. There she lived as a Christian widow, striving to sanctify herself by the practice of all virtues, and by continual austerities. And there she shortly afterwards died, in the odor of sanctity. One thing only gave her pain in her last illness. She was leaving behind her two children, still in their tender age, the one not having yet reached its sixth year, nor the other its fourth, and she feared lest, in process of time, they should be corrupted, and follow in the steps of their unhappy father. She had, therefore, recourse to our Lord with that fervor and confidence which animated all her prayers, and she asked of him the favor, that the children should not be separated from their mother. Her prayer was favorably heard, and although the two children were then in perfect health, the one became ill immediately, and died before the mother, while the other followed eight days after her own departure.

I should continue indefinitely, my Reverend Father, if I were to speak again of many other neophytes, whose virtue and faith were equally tried. What, however, I have already written will suffice to give some idea of the fervor which reigns in the Mission of St. Francis Xavier du Sault. His Grace the Bishop of Quebec, who visited our neophytes, has given his public testimony to their virtue. It is thus that this high Prelate speaks in a relation which he gave of the state of New France, and which was published in 1688 :—"The ordinary life of all these Christians has "nothing about it which is common, and one might take it for a "veritable monastery. As they have abandoned all the advan- "tages of their own country, for the sole reason that they might "secure their salvation near the French, we can there see every-

"thing arranged for the practice of the most perfect freedom from "worldly passions, and they preserve among themselves so admi- "rable a method to promote their holiness, that it would be dif- "ficult to add anything else."

I hope, my Reverend Father, that your zeal will often lead you to pray to the God of mercy for these new converts, to the end that He would preserve them in that state of fervor in which He has placed them by His grace. With every sentiment of respect,

END OF PART I.